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BRITISH UNIVERSITIES  
AND THE STATE

# BRITISH UNIVERSITIES AND THE STATE

BY  
ROBERT O. BERDAHL

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TO DORIS

“A university is a trust confided by the state to certain hands for the common interest of the nation; . . . a university may, and ought, by the state to be from time to time corrected, reformed, or recast, . . . looking towards an improved accomplishment of its essential ends.”—Sir William Hamilton, 1853.

“A university is like a man, it may gain the whole world and lose its own soul.”—John Murray, 1935.

## PREFACE

THIS STUDY is an attempt to plough some of the fields between higher education and political science. The need for research in this relatively untilled area first occurred to me in 1954, when I occupied a peculiarly opportune vantage point as half-time graduate student in political science and half-time Administrative Analyst in the President's Office of the University of California. From this position it seemed to me that in the coming years political authorities of one kind or another were going to play a significantly larger role in university affairs, since higher education would not only be needing greater amounts of public subsidies, but would also find its educational policies increasingly involved in matters of *raison d'état* in the Sputnik era.

I therefore welcomed the opportunity subsequently presented by the receipt of a Marshall Scholarship to undertake two years of research at the London School of Economics and Political Science on the relations between British universities and the state. Although, as I point out in the Introduction, the British relationships are not exactly comparable to the American—the British universities being all private institutions—there are, nevertheless, enough *de facto* parallels to make this study worthy of American interest. It would not, after all, be the first time that we had learned something from our British cousins.

Believing that writers dealing with the social sciences, and *a fortiori* those attempting normative judgments, should make their personal biases clear, I point to two of my own pertinent to this study which seem, however, more or less to cancel each other out. On the one hand, as a college teacher, I have a strong sympathy for the universities' plea to be left alone to get on with their work. On the other hand, as a student of the political process, I realize that the democratic state may make legitimate demands upon the citizens and associations which are enjoying its protection.

A more substantial difficulty than that of personal bias consists of the scope and nature of the material relevant to this subject. For an understanding of the subtleties and nuances with which the relations between the state and the universities abound (as do so many other aspects of British national life), recourse to the personalities involved was as necessary as to the library shelves. I am deeply indebted to many persons in the academic and political worlds for granting me much of their time and some of their confidences. If the following pages do not give more explicit evidence of this, it is merely because of my informants' general desire not to be quoted.

I should like to express my appreciation to the following persons and agencies, while absolving them of any responsibility for such errors as this work may contain: the British Government and the Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission, for making the research possible; Russell Barthell and Robert Johnson of the University of California administrative staff, for much wise counsel; Dr. J. F. Foster and staff of the Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth, for assistance in arranging interviews in Britain; Professor William Robson and Mr. Keith Panter-Brick of the London School of Economics, who kindly served as faculty advisors while I was in London and provided me with invaluable help; Sir Keith Murray and staff of the University Grants Committee, who coöperated in every way; the many vice-chancellors and principals, university faculty members and officials, Members of Parliament, and civil servants, who granted me interviews; and my doctoral committee at the University of California at Berkeley—Dr. Leslie Lipson, Dr. Peter Odegard, and Dr. Thomas McConnell— for their suggestions and advice regarding the manuscript.

I wish to thank Ernest Benn, Ltd., for permission to use excerpts from *Civic Universities*, by W. H. G. Armytage (London, 1955); Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd., for permission to quote from *The Older Universities of England—Oxford and Cambridge*, by Albert Mansbridge (London, 1923); and the Columbia University Press, publishers of *Government Assistance to Universities in Great Britain*, by H. W. Dodds, L. M. Hacker, and L. Rogers (New York, 1952), and *The Development of Academic Freedom in the United States*, by Richard Hofstadter and Walter P. Metzger (New York, 1955), for the privilege of using passages from these works. I am very grateful to Professor William A. Robson for permission to quote from the original English version of his article, "Las universidades británicas y el estado," published in *Nuestro Tiempo*, Vol. 3, No. 22, in 1956.

To Miss Helen Travis, an editor at the University of California Press, goes very deep appreciation for her extensive aid in guiding this work through publication. And finally, I wish to acknowledge the role of my wife, who not only provided the indispensable patience and encouragement which any plodding author needs, but also used her abundant talents to improve the clarity and style of many of the following pages.

ROBERT O. BERDAHL

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## INTRODUCTION

IN BRITAIN, as in many Western nations, it has long been insisted that, in the name of freedom, a distinction be made between "the state" and "society," limiting carefully the powers of the former and encouraging in the latter a proliferation of voluntary associations toward the attainment of economic, political, religious, educational, and other types of goals. The "pluralist state," with its multiple public and private sources of power, was considered by many to be a major answer to the problem of avoiding monolithic tyranny.

Recently, however, Western statesmen have come to realize that there can also be a danger to freedom in an overlimitation of state power. For if a state suffers from an inability to organize its various public and private resources into their most effective competitive posture (in either the economic or the military sense), national prosperity may decline at the very least, or outright military defeat may occur at the worst. Even the pluralist state, therefore, must attempt to see that its more important private associations do not operate at cross purposes with the essential national needs of survival and prosperity.

The dilemma has thus been to increase the limited powers of the state sufficiently to enable it to meet foreign challenges effectively without, as a result, sacrificing disproportionately the freedom and vitality of those private associations whose autonomy constitutes such an important bulwark of a free society. It is the aim of this study to examine a crucial manifestation of such an extension of state authority in Britain—that relating to the universities---and to attempt an assessment of the degree to which the dilemma just described has been resolved therein. This assessment will entail a balancing of state actions in the national interest against the claims of the universities to the right of autonomy.

Although social scientists have recently given considerable attention to the nature of the relations between the pluralist state and such subordinate associations within it as trade unions, political parties, churches, pressure groups, and mass media, there has been relatively little recognition of the universities' increasing involvement in state affairs.

Yet in Britain since the end of World War II, a variety of circumstances have operated to make the universities "political animals" in the broad, nonpejorative sense in which many other parts of society

have now come under more immediate state surveillance. The universities, all privately founded and until recent years largely self-financed, formerly governed themselves in splendid isolation from one another and the state; now, however, they have become in effect part of an articulated national system of higher education, each still self-governing but strongly influenced by national policies in many of its decisions regarding curricula, faculty, student body, capital plant, and research, and each currently receiving an amount near the national average of three-fourths of its annual income from state funds."

It is not difficult to trace the general causes of this transformation. For one thing, the universities, like all other vital national assets, were mobilized on behalf of the war efforts in 1914, and even more thoroughly in 1939. As wars have become more technical, so the universities' value to the nation has increased; it is axiomatic in the nuclear age that the value of a university physics department can often surpass that of an aircraft carrier.

In the second place, the British nation embarked in 1945 on a three-pronged program, each part of which tended to enhance the state's dependence on the products of university teaching and research. The enormous postwar task of restoring the country to a level of industrial competitiveness was alone sufficient to require peacetime planning and the production of university graduates on an unprecedented scale. Government-sponsored research increased greatly. To this was added the advent of a Labour Government with its twin emphases on an extension of the state welfare services and a more immediate realization of the opportunities implicit in the coalition-sponsored Education Act of 1944. The "national interest" as thus interpreted meant that the type, number, and quality of university graduates—and even their social origins—became more urgently than ever before the objects of state concern.

The state, with these increasing reasons to intervene in university affairs, also had greater opportunity to do so, for after the war the

<sup>1</sup> In the Appendices may be found the following information regarding British universities: Appendix I—a list of the universities, the year of their founding charters, and their enrollments in 1954–55; Appendix II—a brief description of the major forms of university self-government; Appendix III—a table of Treasury grants to universities in selected years between 1919 and 1956, and the proposed grants for the five-year period 1957–1962; and Appendix IV—a table showing the various sources of university income in selected years between 1919 and 1956.

<sup>2</sup> The percentage of university income which comes from national grants actually varies from as low as 54.8 per cent at Cambridge University in 1954–55 (where heavy endowments lessen the national grant proportion) to as high as 85.6 per cent at Reading University (which receives little income from either endowments or local government grants). University Grants Committee, *Returns from Universities and University Colleges, 1954–55*, Cmd. 9800 (1956), p. 41.



universities were much more dependent on the national subsidy distributed by the University Grants Committee. Among the many factors contributing to this greater need for state money were the effects of acute inflation, which raised university expenses while reducing the value of those endowments not invested in equities; the heavy incidence of state taxation, which reduced the relative importance of private benefactions in university finances; the widening of the fields of knowledge, especially in the sciences, with consequent higher costs of providing staff, libraries, and apparatus; and, finally, the huge flood of students seeking entrance after the war, bringing additional expenses to the universities only partially covered by their tuition fees.

The simultaneity of temptation and opportunity thus placed a tremendous responsibility on the state authorities to use their power with discretion. Their delicate task was to ensure a maximum university contribution towards national survival and prosperity while keeping to a minimum the inevitable decline in university autonomy, both in the immediate interest of academic freedom and in the long-range interest of placing the proper limits on the over-all power of the state.

Of course, it can be and has been argued that the universities were not mere passive instruments of state policy, waiting to be disposed of according to the good judgment or arbitrary whim of the government; the universities, with their long and cherished tradition of independence from state control, would not have submitted to any drastic changes in their powers of self-government. But this fact, while true and while not unimportant as a long-range reality, should not be over-emphasized, for it places the situation that existed after the war in a false light. On the one hand, "arbitrary whims" were no more probable in this area of state action than in any other relating to the issue of British freedoms. The same informal understandings that protect the other liberties of British citizens under the unwritten constitution also operate with regard to the universities—namely, the essential agreement among the government, Parliament, and the electorate that such freedoms ought to continue. One suspects that any minister or set of ministers given to arbitrary whims would not long endure in Britain.

On the other hand, if the state threat was not as menacing as it has sometimes been represented, neither was the universities' defense as completely unyielding as some would have liked it to be. Faced not with an overnight state ultimatum to change their policies in line with those dictated by the government, but merely with an increased tempo of state interest in, and subsidy to, the institutions which it had been helping and reforming during the previous century, the universities

found nothing harmful in accepting such aid or in responding to such interest. Indeed, it could be argued that, given the financial conditions facing the universities, their only alternative to accepting increased state assistance was to renounce, for the most part, their efforts to meet the current needs of society. Somehow, one cannot picture this happening in Britain either.

The university-state relations to be analyzed present themselves, then, not in the dramatic blacks and whites that admit of easy generalization, but in the nuances of gray, which allow judgments to be made only after the most meticulous balancing of arguments. In essence, the state's task in defining the "national interest" as it relates to universities is highly complicated by the absence of objective criteria for assessing the universities' value to the nation. In agriculture, by way of contrast, measurements can be made of yield per acre and from these the state can derive some general formula to use as a basis on which to judge the national interest. The government, for instance, has been known to order (albeit reluctantly and after all other techniques have been exhausted) some of its citizens dispossessed of farms which have been judged to be run too inefficiently for the national interest.

Where universities are concerned, however, it is inconceivable that the national interest could be defined in terms of a formula equating "a little more efficiency" with "a little less autonomy." For one thing, it is widely accepted that in the West a high degree of academic freedom should itself be regarded as a vital constituent of the public interest. Second, although immediate national needs might seem to require, for example, expanded science facilities far more than enlarged arts faculties, it is in fact impossible to measure the relative value to the nation of the various types of university work; the Chaucerian scholar's contributions to Britain's vitality is not, like that of the scientist, translatable into pounds, shillings, and pence, nor can it be exploded over Christmas Island.

Finally, the state must realize that in dealing with fragile institutions like universities, outside interventions in the name of utility—even well-meaning ones—may actually "kill the golden goose." For a variety of such reasons, the state can define the national interest as it relates to universities only in terms of *ad hoc* decisions on specific issues.

If the state can derive but little guidance from the general concept of the national interest, the universities have found the term "academic freedom" to be in its own way equally vague. Because of its ambiguity, they have not always been certain when to yield gracefully to some governmental request and when to oppose it on grounds of vital prin-

ciple. One reason why confusion persists is that academic freedom, like the elephant variously described by the several blind men, is made up of many parts and should more appropriately be termed "academic freedoms." "Liberty is concerned with the proper adjustments of relationships, and in education a number of different kinds of relationships are involved."<sup>3</sup> At a university, complex relations exist between the governing board and outside bodies (the most important of which is the state), the governing board and the faculty, the governing board and the students, the faculty and the students, and the faculty-student community and outside bodies. For all of these relations it is possible to raise questions concerning the proper degrees of relative authority; this study, however, will be confined for the most part to those affected by state actions.<sup>4</sup>

In surveys of university-state relations in most other countries one would be obliged to give more attention to the dramatic matter of the interest of the state in the ideological beliefs of the faculty and student body.<sup>5</sup> Philosophers since the time of Plato have noted the importance to the state of the proper indoctrination of its youth. In Britain, however, outside of security checks made on graduates and faculty members who are assuming highly sensitive positions with the government, Whitehall engages in no activities remotely resembling the political dismissals and loyalty oaths occasionally seen in other countries. There is, rather, a wide degree of agreement among the universities, the major political parties, and the top civil servants, on the principle of what has elsewhere been described as "the modern idea of academic freedom." This is a composite concept, taking

... from modern science ... the notion of a continuing search for new truths, fostered by freedom of inquiry, verified by objective processes, and judged by those who are competent; from commerce ... the concept of a free competition among ideas—hence the suggestive metaphor of a free market in thought; from the politics of the liberal state ... the ideas of free speech and a free press and an appreciation of the multitudes of perspectives in a pluralist society; from religious liberalism and the long historical development which led to the taming of the sectarian animus ... the ideas of toleration and religious liberty."

<sup>3</sup> E. James, "Freedom in Education," in Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, *Proceedings for 1946-47*, 88 (1947), p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> For a discussion of academic freedom in relation to internal government, see Sir Eric Ashby, "Self Government in Modern British Universities," *Science and Freedom*, Vol. 4, No. 7 (December, 1956), p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> For examples of extreme state control of university life, see E. Y. Hartshorne, *The German Universities and National Socialism* (1937); and George Knuller, *The Educational Philosophy of National Socialism* (1941). Relevant studies of the American scene are: Richard Hofstadter and W. P. Metzger, *The Development of Academic Freedom in the United States* (1955); and R. M. MacIver, *Academic Freedom in our Time* (1955).

<sup>6</sup> Hofstadter and Metzger, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

With governmental concurrence on these broad motifs, the more explosive ideological issues are virtually removed from university-state relations, and the question of state infringement of academic freedom has assumed a less sinister, though not less important, aspect. In 1953 R. A. Butler, then Chancellor of the Exchequer (the minister in charge of university grants), expressed well the emerging situation: "The danger is not of a conscious oppression or parsimony by the government, but rather . . . of a gradual moulding into unnatural shapes of all [university] activities by the demands for particular researches or for the production of particular types of specialists."<sup>7</sup>

In fairness to the state it should be noted that the universities, in deciding their policies, have always been subjected to numerous overt and covert pressures from both public and private sources. Indeed, in a democratic society this is inevitable and probably quite healthy, for no guildlike institutions should be completely immune from considering the interests of outsiders and the state. But it is important to distinguish between university policies' being *influenced* and their being *determined* by outside considerations. If state pressures have passed that almost indefinable point at which legitimate influence has become illegitimate control, then something at least of university autonomy has been lost, though the outward forms of self-government remain. In the present study I shall examine the evidence concerning this question and offer some observations on it in chapter ix.

By the same token, the student of university-state relations must also take into account the fact that on specific issues the state may be "right" and the university or universities "wrong"; for, as later pages on university history in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries will show, university self-government is no guarantee of unremitting wisdom. The claim to university autonomy rests, however, not only on the right of a private association to operate in essential freedom, but also on the argument that, in the long run and occasional mistakes to the contrary notwithstanding, university self-government is the surest means of preserving the basic values defined above, under the title, the "modern idea of academic freedom." Although the national government may possibly be an efficient master of many types of enterprises, defenders of university autonomy insist that the spirit of government bureaucracy would be completely antipathetic to the real purposes of the university.

<sup>7</sup> R. A. Butler, in "Government and the Universities," in Seventh Congress of the Universities of the Commonwealth, *Report of the Proceedings* (1953), p. 28.

In Britain, of course, there is no question of having this type of complete state control and administration. The issues relate rather to the role of state power as it is exerted on various aspects of university life, and to the crucial question: "How many piecemeal changes may a university be influenced or compelled to accept before its essential nature is altered?" Commenting on this, a *Times Educational Supplement* editorial noted, "You can blow up a balloon so high, and if you go on, it bursts and you are left with a piece of coloured rubber which is not a balloon at all." Observations on this matter will also be offered in chapter ix.

The plan of this study is to present in Part One a general historical background, purely descriptive and based mainly on secondary sources, to be followed in Part Two by analytical sections on the constitutional, administrative, and political aspects of the state's dealings with the universities. Such a procedure inevitably entails some repetition of material, but this is a lesser evil than obscurity. In the conclusion, chapter xi, are offered some normative judgments on the strengths and weaknesses of the present relationship and a conjecture about its wider applicability in other countries.

Several limitations of the topic have been made, to reduce it to workable proportions. A major omission has been that of the universities' relations with the various local authorities. These local units of government, as public bodies which make some grants to nearby universities, which appoint some of the members of these universities' governing boards, and which finance the greater proportion of university scholarships, are obviously not without interest in a study of the relations between government and universities. However, it was discovered that although such contacts between local authorities and universities were numerous, they were qualitatively not very crucial in terms of the central interest of this study; for all the university and local government officials interviewed were unanimous in declaring that the local authorities neither exert nor are in a position to exert excessive influence on the universities.<sup>8</sup> The local grants constituted only 3.2 per cent of the total university income in Britain in 1954-55,<sup>9</sup> the local appointees on university governing boards are a distinct minority

<sup>8</sup> March 22, 1957, p. 391.

<sup>9</sup> The same is not true, however, for local control over technical colleges, and this point is considered briefly in chapter x below.

<sup>10</sup> This figure varies from as low as zero at Oxford and Cambridge to as high as 15.4 per cent at North Staffordshire University College. However, Nottingham University with 10.3 per cent was the only other institution receiving more than a tenth of its income from local grants. University Grants Committee, *Returns, 1954-55*, p. 41.

and do not act as official representatives," and the local authority scholarships are administered on the same general basis as those of the Ministry of Education.<sup>12</sup>

The subject of adult (or extramural) education is a further omission from this work, and technical education (which in Britain is handled mostly outside the universities, in technical colleges administered by local authorities) has been included only to the extent that the problem of technical studies is related to the universities. Finally, although most of the analysis in Part Two is equally relevant to the Scottish and Welsh institutions, the historical focus of Part One is on the English universities, and in particular, on their relations to the state in the last century and a half.

Notwithstanding all these limitations of the topic, the relevant material for it still covers a very wide range of data. If, as many feel, it is impossible to write a good contemporary history and criticism, this work must be justified on the grounds that some light is better than none, and that the British experience, though anchored firmly in conditions indigenous to the island, may nevertheless offer valuable insights into the proper relations between universities and the state in other democratic societies.

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<sup>12</sup> The latter statement was confirmed by officials of three different local authorities.

<sup>13</sup> See below, pp. 93-95.

## PART ONE

# THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF UNIVERSITY-STATE RELATIONS

*Part One does not purport to be a general history of the English universities, but merely an outline of their major relations with the state since the twelfth century. A straight chronological treatment has been employed up to World War II, after which time, because of the importance and wealth of the data, university-state relations have been broken down into those concerning the University Grants Committee (chap. v) and those concerning other state activities affecting the universities (chap. vi).*

*Early state financial relations with the universities have been lifted out of their normal chronological context in order that state assistance might be treated as a whole in chapter iv. Similarly, questions concerning the universities' early legal and constitutional status in the state have been, for the most part, left for treatment with their present status in chapter vii, Part Two.*





## CHAPTER II

# THE ANCIENT UNIVERSITIES AND ROYAL INTERFERENCES (1167-1800)

ALTHOUGH university-state relations before the Reformation were many and various, their importance to this work is lessened by two factors. First, the religious issues which were later to provide a major cause for state intervention in university affairs appeared primarily as theological and not as political problems during the early centuries of Roman Catholic monopoly. (John Wycliffe's heresy was an exception to this generalization and will be dealt with at greater length below.) Second, the pre-Reformation state was not the completely sovereign political body that we know today; rather, the early kings had to share considerable power with the church hierarchy and the feudal lords. This permitted the universities to live in

... the interstices of medieval society, taking advantage of its decentralization and the balance of its conflicting powers to further their own corporate interests. The absence of a monolithic structure of power, the existence of a real plurality and diversity of interests within the framework of both the ecclesiastical and secular powers put the universities in a position in which they were not easily overwhelmed. They appealed to king or council against pope, to pope against king or bishop, and to king and pope alike against truculent town governments.<sup>1</sup>

The foundation of Oxford University is reputed to have been brought about by just such rivalry among national figures. The dispute of King Henry II with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas à Becket, led Henry in 1167 to bid English clergymen studying at the University of Paris to return home "as they loved their benefices." The king of France then retaliated for this affront by expelling every other English scholar in his country. Many of the recalled and expelled students gathered in Oxford, "bringing with them their teachers, and something of the organisation under which they had lived in Paris."<sup>2</sup>

Relations between "town" and "gown" in Oxford were notoriously bad, and blood was literally shed on numerous occasions. If the University's appeals to spiritual or secular authorities did not bring sufficient redress for a supposed grievance, it had other recourses: a stopping of classes, called "cessation," to be followed, if unsuccessful, by "dispersion"—a mass emigration of masters and students to a new location. Local business interests, of course, dreaded this latter sanction.

<sup>1</sup> Richard Hofstadter and Walter P. Metzger, *The Development of Academic Freedom in the United States* (1955), pp. 7-8.

<sup>2</sup> J. A. R. Marriott, *Oxford: Its Place in National History* (1933), p. 26.

In 1209 one of these incidents between students and townspeople had unexpectedly far-reaching consequences. The mayor of Oxford appealed to King John, who was then being threatened with excommunication by Pope Innocent III, and John, in revenge against the church, sided with the townspeople against the students, many of them clergymen. As a result, three students were hanged as examples, and the others fled, some back to Paris, some to Reading, but most to Cambridge, where England's second ancient university was established as a result.

Oxford city lay under the interdict of the papal legate for its abuse of the University, and local prosperity began to decline in the absence of the students and masters. In 1214, when King John submitted to the Pope, the townspeople of Oxford also made their peace with the papal legate and humbly accepted the terms of the Legatine Ordinance of that year. This important document, besides stipulating severe conditions for the city's pardon, bestowed upon the University "a set of privileges unique in the history of social institutions."<sup>8</sup> Among the most significant of such privileges were those granting freedom from ecclesiastical control in England and creating the office of University chancellor, with legal powers which removed the University and its scholars from the civil jurisdiction of the city.

Cambridge was not to receive similar privileges until two centuries later, in 1432, when it was also accorded independence from English ecclesiastical authorities, the guardians of theological orthodoxy.

In Henry III the universities had an enthusiastic supporter; he sent letters to the sheriffs of Oxford and Cambridge, granting royal protection to the scholars, and in 1229 he invited the students of the University of Paris, then harassed by riots with the townspeople, to come to England and permit her king "to lead you back to liberty."

The thirteenth and fourteenth centuries saw Oxford and Cambridge flourishing, with the arrival of several orders of learned friars and the establishment of numerous colleges. Many of these new foundations had special administrative arrangements with a particular region or grammar school whereby places would be reserved in the college for students from that region or school.

Aside from various theological skirmishes with the church hierarchy, Oxford suffered no major threats to her academic freedom until the late fourteenth century, when John Wycliffe's attacks upon church

<sup>8</sup> George Kneller, *Higher Learning in Britain* (1955), p. 4.

<sup>9</sup> Albert Mansbridge, *The Older Universities of England—Oxford and Cambridge* (1923), pp. 9–10.

abuses and later upon church doctrines caused the powers of Rome to be invoked for the suppression of his teaching. However, neither a command of the Archbishop of Canterbury nor a papal bull could at first force the Chancellor of Oxford to expel Wycliffe and his followers, the Lollards. But when Wycliffe's teachings, having been spread widely around Britain by his "poor preachers," seemed to have been at the root of certain peasant uprisings, the Crown became alarmed at the political possibilities of Lollardry and joined the church in demanding its suppression. Oxford had to yield to this imposing combination of forces, and in 1382 Wycliffe was expelled, but his teachings persisted. As late as 1411, with state approval, Archbishop Arundel "visited" the University to eradicate the last lingering traces of Lollardry. At this time the exemption privileges of the Legatine Ordinance were revoked, not to be restored until 1479, when Pope Sixtus IV became sufficiently convinced of Oxford's submissiveness to the church.<sup>5</sup>

Two trends during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries altered the internal structure of the universities and made them more susceptible to political intervention. First, at Oxford, the office of chancellor was gradually changed from that of a biennially elected resident-protector to that of a permanently chosen, nonresident official—"practically the instrument of [the University's] subjection to an autocratic court and an Erastian prelacy."<sup>6</sup>

Second, many colleges founded at Oxford and Cambridge between Wycliffe's heresy and the English Reformation, a period witnessing great religious controversies, were given an ecclesiastical bias and were strongly fortified financially against dependence upon possible "corrupting influences" elsewhere in the university. These special funds came from diversions to the new colleges of rich monastic endowments, which were then drawing increasingly covetous glances from the lay public. As these individual colleges enlarged their strength at the expense of the central university, the latter became weaker vis-à-vis the state.

With the commencement of the English Reformation, "the history of academic controversy [became] almost identical with that of the Reformation itself."<sup>7</sup> This was not a phenomenon confined to England, for on the Continent,

...under the territorial confessional states, the last remnants of corporate autonomy disappeared, and the long process by which the secular state had been en-

<sup>5</sup> Hastings Rashdall, *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages* (1936), III, 136.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

<sup>7</sup> Hofstadter and Metzger, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-73.

crouching upon the university reached its climax. The same formula that had been used to bring peace at Augsburg was the effective formula governing intellectual life: *cuius regio, eius universitas*.<sup>8</sup>

In England, to the misfortune of scholars who refused to take religious oaths falsely, the *cuius regio* underwent alterations from Protestant rule to Catholic and back again, each monarch in turn attempting to impose his own religion on the universities. Henry VIII, though remembered in part for his beneficent aid to the universities,<sup>9</sup> nevertheless became so angry at their reservations to his divorce and subsequent breach with the Pope that he sanctioned "political interference beyond anything the universities had experienced."<sup>10</sup> This took the form of a Royal Injunction in 1535 which called for an oath of loyalty, set some conditions of lecturing, banned the study of canon law and of Duns Scotus' philosophy, and required all divinity lectures to be based directly on the Scriptures.

An even more destructive political intervention in university affairs came in the reign of Edward VI, when the Protector, Somerset, widened the basis of disagreement with Rome to include doctrinal questions, as well as the issue of papal supremacy. This more extreme Protestantism, mirrored in the Second Act of Uniformity and the Second Prayer Book, issued in 1552, resulted in a Royal Commission visit to the universities in 1549 to eliminate the "vestiges of popery." Along with some constructive reforms, the Commission left a wide swath of destruction: altars, images, and statues defaced; historical manuscripts and stained-glass windows destroyed; and the Duke of Humphrey's famous library ruined. Many Roman divines and scholars left the universities, and student enrollment dropped "as the dissolution of the monasteries cut off the main source from which students had been drawn."<sup>11</sup>

At the accession in 1553 of "Bloody Mary," a devout Roman Catholic, many of the exiled professors returned to the universities, but conditions now become intolerable for the Protestant scholars, most of whom fled for their lives. Among the bold few remaining behind were Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley, who became known as the martyrs "educated at Cambridge and burnt at Oxford." But the Queen's death in 1558, followed a year later by that of her zealous Archbishop Pole, halted the violent process of inquisition.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>9</sup> He is credited with, among other things, founding Christ Church, Oxford, and Trinity College, Cambridge, endowing each university with five regius professorships, and the following saying: "By their [the universities'] maintenance our realms shall be well governed when we be dead and rotten." Marriott, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

<sup>10</sup> Hofstadter and Metzger, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

<sup>11</sup> Marriott, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

When Elizabeth I took the throne and decided that the English church should remain independent of Rome, there was a final exodus of Catholic masters from the universities. A religious compromise somewhere between the near-Calvinist Protestantism of Edward and the Anglo-Catholicism of Henry was reached; and this settlement was then politically imposed on the country. The universities were the object of a good share of legislation, some of it helpful, some of it restrictive. An act of Parliament in 1571 legally incorporated the two universities, investing the "Chancellor, Masters and Scholars" of each with the rights of perpetual succession. Another act, passed in 1576, provided for additional endowment of the Oxford colleges.

On the debit side, however, were the Elizabethan Codes that were inflicted upon the universities, according to which the control over intrauniversity legislation was transferred from the main body of resident teachers to the vice-chancellor and heads of colleges. This change was instituted because "the monarch found the Colleges more easy to manage than the University as a whole."<sup>12</sup> In addition, at Oxford, where the Earl of Leicester was Chancellor from 1565 to 1588, a requirement was begun that every student on matriculation had to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England and to take the Oath of Supremacy. At Cambridge, where Puritanism was always stronger than at Oxford, Thomas Cartwright was expelled for criticizing too openly the internal government of the Anglican Church.

In the reign of James I, the universities received both increasing privileges and increasing restrictions from the hands of the monarch. He acknowledged the growing importance of the universities by giving them each two Members in the House of Commons; on the other hand, he bound them more tightly by calling for all candidates for degrees at either university to take an oath of loyalty to the episcopal form of church government and the liturgical practices of the Church of England.

Archbishop Laud, trusted counselor to Charles I, used his office as Chancellor of Oxford (1630-1641) to embark on a vigorous policy of reform. Besides presenting the University and college libraries with numerous manuscripts and books, Laud attempted to supervise the University's life and practices in great detail, his efforts culminating in the Laudian (or Carolinian) Statutes of 1636. These statutes, which continued to govern the University until 1854, were essentially refinements and clarifications of the earlier Elizabethan Code which

<sup>12</sup> Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge Universities, *Report of the Commissioners*, Cmd. 1588 (1922), pp. 13-14.

transferred most of the effective powers to the heads of the colleges. Cambridge was saved from Laud's avowed intention to undertake a similar reform there by his involvement in the Civil War, which broke out in 1642.

Both universities, but particularly Oxford, played an important role in the conflict between Parliament and the Crown. Oxford, then more friendly to the monarch than Cambridge was, became the headquarters of Charles's forces and the virtual seat of the King's government and court. Many of the colleges were taken over for various military and courtly functions, and the college plate and treasures were quickly donated to the royal cause.

Cambridge was occupied by the troops of Cromwell, who committed the heads of St. John's, Queen's, and Jesus' Colleges to prison after intercepting some of their college plate en route to the King. Student enrollment dropped markedly, of course, during this period of turmoil, and little real university work was accomplished.

When the Roundheads finally overcame the Cavalier forces of the King, the victorious Parliament set to work with a will to ensure that the universities duly corrected the "offences, abuses, and disorders especially of late times committed there." A parliamentary commission of twenty-four members was appointed in 1647 to visit and reform Oxford. Cambridge had already undergone ejections of persons of "questionable loyalty" and was more amenable to parliamentary control. Both universities were ultimately placed "under the rule of Commissions, which held visitation after visitation."<sup>13</sup> Fortunately, both Cromwell, who became Chancellor of Oxford in 1650, and John Owen, whom he appointed as Vice-Chancellor, were men sincerely devoted to higher learning, and the University thrived during the decade before the Restoration, in spite of political interference.

When Charles II came to the throne, there was once again a mass shift of the university population. It has been estimated that after the Act of Uniformity was passed in 1662, nearly a fifth of the English teachers and clergymen were ejected as not conforming to its requirements.<sup>14</sup>

[The Act of Uniformity] required every university or college officer formally to subscribe in the presence of the Vice Chancellor to a specified "Declaration" [which] included a promise of conformity to the revised Liturgy, an abjuration of the Solemn League and Covenant, and an undertaking not to attempt any alteration in the government of Church or State, or on any pretence whatever to take up arms against the King.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Mansbridge, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

<sup>14</sup> Hofstadter and Metzger, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-74.

<sup>15</sup> Marriott, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

Charles II, like his father before him, had occasion to make Oxford his capital—once, in 1665, to avoid the plague then in London, and again in 1680, in order to seek an atmosphere less hostile to the monarchy on the issue of the royal succession. On both occasions the University willingly turned over large sections of its colleges and grounds to the royal party, and its continuing devotion to the cause of the King was demonstrated by a decree in 1683 against pernicious books and damnable doctrines, “specially anathematising as false, seditious and impious Hobbes’ theory of an original contract and the doctrine that resistance to the King can, under any circumstances, be lawful.”<sup>16</sup> In 1684, on the order of the King, John Locke was denied his studentship at Christ Church College. Finally, the University gave vigorous assistance to the Crown in the suppression of the Monmouth Rebellion.

As a result, James II, on his accession to the throne as a Roman Catholic, felt overconfident about the extent to which he could count on unquestioning support in Oxford. Forgetting that the University’s loyalties were divided between the Crown and the Anglican Church, he began issuing dispensations for avowed Roman Catholics to hold University posts, “notwithstanding laws to the contrary.” In 1687 he issued a Declaration of Indulgence, revoking all laws against Roman Catholics and Protestant Nonconformists, and then attempted to coerce the fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford, to elect as their head a Roman Catholic who was not otherwise qualified for the post according to the statutes. When the Magdalen faculty refused to be intimidated, the King himself traveled to Oxford and, expelling most of the fellows, installed as Head the Bishop of Oxford, not a Catholic but regarded as a loyal Jacobite.<sup>17</sup>

At Cambridge James employed the same highhanded methods, bringing in the infamous Judge Jeffreys to browbeat the vice-chancellor and ultimately to deprive him of office. But the King found that “his [royal] predecessors had helped to create in the College system an instrument so powerful that [he] could no longer manipulate it with ease or even with safety.”<sup>18</sup> As events proved, the universities’ resistance to James II foreshadowed that of the nation, and the Glorious Revolution followed in a short time.

In spite of the significant diminution of the Crown’s powers wrought by the Revolution, William III in 1689 still retained considerable royal

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142.

<sup>17</sup> For further details of this incident, see Dr. J. R. Bloxam, *Magdalen College and King James II* (1886).

<sup>18</sup> Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge Universities, *Report . . .* (1922), pp. 13–14.

discretion, and John Locke, perhaps not without bitter memories of his expulsion, urged upon the King the following advice: "Sire, you have made a most glorious and happy Revolution; but the good effects of it will soon be lost, if no care is taken to regulate the universities."<sup>19</sup> William, however, must have neglected this admonition in the main, for Oxford during his reign smoldered as a center of Jacobite sympathies. Although the University had opposed James's interpretation of his powers, it was not yet ready because of that to shift its allegiance to a new king.

At the death of Queen Anne in 1714, Oxford became more openly Jacobite and expressed its hostility to the new Hanoverian line in numerous unmistakable ways, including riots. Martial law was proclaimed in 1715, and a force of government cavalry was dispatched to maintain order in the city. Cambridge, although much more friendly to George I than was its sister university, shared enough of Oxford's alleged other sins of sloth and lethargy to be included as a target of a spate of criticisms and demands for university reform published in pamphlet form in 1716 and 1717.

One of these diatribes, in demanding a royal visitation of the universities, argued that England's future clergy were being trained in an atmosphere of perjured oaths, immorality, and disloyalty, but that, with royal intervention,

... the Universities, those Nests, or Cages of unclean Birds, would be effectually cleansed, the Church be honour'd with a learned, sober, pious and labourious Clergy, Religion would flourish, Virtue be encouraged, Wickedness fly, and be asham'd to show its Face, a Protestant government be secured and established, and God would delight to dwell among us.<sup>20</sup>

In 1717 the Lord Chancellor proposed to introduce a bill to regulate both universities: their constitutions were to be suspended, their revenues administered by a special commission, and their chief appointments vested in the Crown. However, the Lord Chancellor became discredited at that time on other grounds and this project was dropped.

The remainder of the eighteenth century saw Oxford gradually becoming reconciled to the Hanoverians, particularly after George III, born and bred in England, mounted the throne. As tension between the universities and the government eased, the universities were allowed to go their own way in the relaxed self-indulgence that was to draw so much critical comment from contemporaries and later historians. George Trevelyan, for example, has noted that

<sup>19</sup> As quoted in Sir William Hamilton, *Discussions on Philosophy and Literature, Education and University Reform* (1853), p. 472.

<sup>20</sup> Anonymous, *Reasons for a Royal Visitation of the Universities* (1717), p. 64.



... the resounding triumph of corporate rights and vested interests over the ill-advised attack of James II, though necessary to preserve our liberties in 1688, had for a long time afterwards the bad effect of freeing all privileged persons from any dread of enquiry or interference. ... This was true for the Parliamentary and Municipal system, it was true for the Church and it was true for the Universities. Gibbon deplored the monopoly enjoyed by Oxford and Cambridge of all the University privileges in England, because ... the spirit of monopolists is narrow, lazy and oppressive.<sup>21</sup>

But the question has been raised whether it was entirely legitimate to put all the blame on the "monopolists." In some ways, this was no more just than to blame spoiled children for the faults of their parents, for certainly the government in its numerous interventions before 1700 had greatly contributed to the universities' subsequent decadence.

Throughout the long period described in this chapter, Oxford and Cambridge strove to retain their academic freedom in the face of sporadic religious and political interventions, but their monopoly of the training of the clergy inevitably made them subject to royal pressure to produce the "proper" kind of men in the pulpits. One commentator described the relationship in these terms:

... Oxford and Cambridge were hindered in their full and free development by those who sought to control them and make them seminaries. ... They were sectarian institutions harried and torn by political disputes. ... The University Tests ... were not a voluntary act of the universities themselves [but] were imposed on the universities by the State. ... The low level of thought and life ... characteristic of both places in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is therefore very largely due to this control and this outside interference exercised by King and Parliament.<sup>22</sup>

It would be a mistake to assume, however, that because there was "a low level of thought and life" at Oxford and Cambridge in the eighteenth century (and this lethargy can be overemphasized), England at large also lacked vitality or the will to reform. The spirit of Methodism (born, it is true, at Oxford, but soon afterward scorned there as "non-U"), the Industrial Revolution, the growth of Utilitarianism, the success of the Nonconformist academies—all these testify to the presence of progressive forces outside the universities. Although the outbreak of the French Revolution and its subsequent excesses postponed the series of economic, political, and educational reforms which had been ripening in England during the latter half of the century, the ameliorating forces were to reappear early in the nineteenth century and, among other accomplishments, contribute to the major overhauling of the universities.

<sup>21</sup> G. M. Trevelyan, *British History in the Nineteenth Century* (1922), p. 26.

<sup>22</sup> Mansbridge, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55 (order transposed).

## REFORM OF THE OLD AND FOUNDATION OF THE NEW UNIVERSITIES (1800-1919)

THE WIDESPREAD reform of Oxford and Cambridge Universities in the nineteenth century, both from within and by the state, and the foundation of many new institutions of higher learning in England were no isolated phenomena of higher education; they constituted merely one segment of a vast spectrum of reform which developed in Britain in that eventful century. Slavery, the increase of crime in new urban centers, care of the poor, local government organization, factory conditions, public health, parliamentary representation, the franchise, primary and secondary education—all these matters, and many more, provided challenge to a seemingly ubiquitous will to improve society, manifested variously in private philanthropy, voluntary social coöperation, and governmental action.

When reforming passions were turned toward university education, four principal questions appeared:

1) Had conditions in England become such that it was necessary to break the six hundred years' monopoly of Oxford and Cambridge by establishing new universities? If so, where, and what kind?

2) Could the much-maligned eighteenth-century level of education at Oxford and Cambridge be raised by improving their curricula, their examination systems, and the character of their faculties and student bodies?

3) Could the administrative structures and statutes of these universities and their constituent colleges be changed so as to remove existing religious restrictions and to make these institutions more easily adaptable to new national needs which might arise?

4) If the reforms implied by the second and third questions were not forthcoming from within the universities themselves, was it necessary, proper, or desirable for the state to intervene to bring them about?

### THE FOUNDATION OF THE FIRST NEW UNIVERSITIES

The "monopoly" held by Oxford and Cambridge referred, of course, only to England and Wales, for Scotland, in spite of having a much smaller population, had possessed four universities for several centuries: St. Andrews (1411), Glasgow (1451), Aberdeen (1494), and Edinburgh (1583). High among the reasons for this greater number of universities north of the border must be placed the Scots' proclivity

for providing a primary and secondary education for a large proportion of their youth.

In England, by way of contrast, the educational needs of the country had for centuries ostensibly been met by providing the upper classes with a relatively small number of grammar schools (that is, Latin grammar schools) and the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Like the universities, the grammar schools were private institutions, independent of the state. But in the course of time, several, by virtue of their eminence and their ability to draw students from many areas, became known as "public schools." Some of these date from very early times, for example, Winchester, 1382; Eton, 1410; Shrewsbury, Repton, and Rugby, the sixteenth century. After most grammar schools, under the Act of Uniformity of 1662, had become the preserve of the Established Church, the Nonconformists began to establish Dissenting academies<sup>1</sup> which, however, had to go without official recognition by the state until 1779, when Protestant Nonconformists were finally allowed to become teachers.

Although some provisions had originally been made for poor scholars at most grammar schools and at both universities, the evolving practices of these institutions, especially during the eighteenth century, were to cater increasingly to sons of wealthier families. Thus, the children of the working class had mostly to rely for whatever education they might get on the chance existence of "dame" or "charity" or "Sunday" primary schools, usually provided by some voluntary body such as the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

However, as the Industrial Revolution spread across Britain, hastened during the Napoleonic Wars by urgent national needs, the population began to concentrate in cities and, notwithstanding the increase of slums, longevity increased. From about thirteen million persons in 1815, the population of Britain was doubled by 1871. "During the first thirty years of the century, Birmingham and Sheffield doubled in size [and] Liverpool, Leeds, Manchester and Glasgow more than doubled."<sup>2</sup> The existing voluntary educational system, which had barely served to meet the needs of agricultural Britain, was clearly inadequate for an expanding, industrial Britain.

Demands were heard from some quarters for a national system of schools, but the government could not be persuaded that this would be a legitimate activity for public authorities to undertake. To attempt to meet the problem, therefore, new voluntary educational groups were

<sup>1</sup> See Irene Parker, *Dissenting Academies in England* (1914).

<sup>2</sup> David Thomson, *England in the Nineteenth Century* (1951), pp. 11-12.

created—some secular, like the British and Foreign School Society, and some religious, like the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church. These societies tried to establish and maintain their respective networks of schools by private subscriptions and by charging small fees, but the costs soon exceeded their limited resources, particularly when the construction of badly needed new school buildings was commenced. The government was therefore finally induced in 1833 to change its policy and to begin making some *ad hoc* grants to these societies to help defray their construction costs. When these grants became a regular national outlay in 1839, a special Privy Council committee (the parent of the present Ministry of Education) was set up to administer them and to arrange for inspection of the schools thus aided.

This belated state action was not, however, sufficient to cope with the problem, for the quality of the voluntary schooling varied greatly according to the region and the society, and there were still many areas which were inadequately served. Why was effective state action postponed on this matter until after 1870?

Sir Ernest Barker, a student of British "national character," has commented on one factor which is relevant to this and subsequent university experience:

[The British genius] prefers, whenever it can, to act in the sphere of "society"—the sphere of voluntary action—and not to depend on the State for every initiative and impulse. But that is not all, even while scope is demanded for the play of voluntary action, the demand is also made that the State should aid such action, and should aid it without impeding or seeking to control its freedom. This may seem paradoxical—indeed it is paradoxical—and yet it is true.<sup>3</sup>

Another and perhaps even more decisive reason why there was no early state action on educational problems lay in the inability of the various religious and secular societies, once they were prepared to admit the necessity of *some* kind of state intervention in education, to agree on the exact nature of that intervention, particularly as it concerned religious instruction. Disagreement between those of the Anglicans who opposed yielding any of the political or educational privileges and monopolies of the Established Church, and the Nonconformists who sought to widen the political and educational rights of Dissenters,

<sup>3</sup> Sir Ernest Barker, *British Universities* (1949), p. 8. An example of this attitude is the *Edinburgh Review's* comment on state education in July, 1861: "God forbid that public spirit in this country should be so dead . . . that we should consign our first social concerns to the paid officials of the State and make State administration the panacea of social evils." As quoted by H. C. Dent, *Universities Quarterly*, 7 (1952), 94.

continued throughout the century and was also to be a major factor in the issue of university reform.

Feelings were so intense about religious education that Parliament, though acting boldly enough in other areas of reform, time and again found itself unable to alter the educational status quo, and therefore left the voluntary system to limp along as best it could. Only the schools in the working-class sectors of society actually had to "limp," of course, for the "public schools" were thriving under a series of reforming headmasters,<sup>4</sup> and many new schools of this kind were founded in the course of the century.<sup>5</sup>

In the absence of a national system of primary and secondary education, the number of students qualifying for a university education in the early nineteenth century was not as great as the growing population and widening industrial needs for trained personnel might lead one to expect. There was, nevertheless, a sufficient increase in the number of qualified students, particularly when the reservoir of Dissenters then excluded by religious tests from the existing universities is considered, to support the foundation of additional centers of higher learning.

The decade between 1826 and 1836 therefore witnessed the establishment in London of University College in 1826 and King's College in 1829, both later affiliated with the University of London, which was chartered in 1836, and the creation in the north of England of the University of Durham, chartered in 1832. The institution at Durham was founded partly as an attempt to safeguard the bounteous funds of the Durham Chapter of the Anglican Church by investing them in some venture which would make them safe from possible confiscation by the Whigs of the House of Commons, who had just passed the Reform Bill of 1832 and were looking for more abuses to correct. Unlike University and King's Colleges, which both grew to serve a commuting city population, Durham soon developed a residential system patterned after that of Oxford and Cambridge and, like these universities, was an exclusively Anglican institution.

Political and religious factors were also involved in the founding of University and King's Colleges. University College, expressly freed from both religious instruction and religious tests, emerged from a "combination between Scotch lawyers, English utilitarians and philanthropists, Jewish financiers and Dissenters of all complexions"<sup>6</sup> and soon became a "political challenge to the ascendancy of the Tory party,

<sup>4</sup> For example, Thomas Arnold, Edward Thring, and Haig Brown.

<sup>5</sup> Marlborough, Wellington, and Clifton, among others.

<sup>6</sup> T. L. Humberstone, *University Reform in London* (1926), p. 27.

which was based on Oxford and Cambridge.”<sup>7</sup> The establishment of this “Cockney College” aroused mixed reactions and produced doggerel such as the following:

But let them not babble of Greek to the rabble,  
Nor teach the Mechanics their letters;  
The labouring classes were born to be asses,  
And not to be aping their betters.”

King’s College was the Anglicans’ high-powered answer to this “Godless institution on Gower Street”; King’s, with the Duke of Wellington, three archbishops, and seven bishops on its founding committee, received the patronage of George IV and a propitious location in Somerset House. However, while King’s College followed the tradition of Oxford and Cambridge in its exclusive dedication to the Established Church, it profited by the example of University College in offering a wider and more modern curriculum than that available at the ancient universities.

Since University and King’s Colleges had similar curricula (except for the additional courses in theology at King’s), and since neither institution was judged to be strong enough individually to award university degrees, there was talk during the early 1830’s of incorporating the two colleges as a single university which would be responsible both for teaching and for degree-granting. King’s, however, was not willing to collaborate that closely with a nondenominational body. The impasse was broken in 1836, when, with government help, a compromise was reached, according to which a central University of London was to be chartered, to serve solely as a separate examining body, not only for students of University and King’s Colleges, but also for any other institutions in Britain or the Empire which the government might later approve. By 1851, twenty-nine general colleges and nearly sixty medical colleges were affiliated with the University of London.<sup>8</sup> In a reorganization in 1858, the government dropped any pretense of judging the adequacy of institutions preparing students for the London degree, and the University’s degrees were opened to all fee-payers, whether self- or otherwise taught, who could satisfy the rigorous examiners. This peculiar position of the University of London as “the board of examiners for the Empire” placed it (but not its affiliated colleges) in a special administrative relationship to the state, and was the reason behind the first national grant to an English university, in 1839. Also

<sup>7</sup> W. H. G. Armytage, *Civic Universities* (1955), p. 172.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 174.

because of this relationship, the government assumed the responsibility of providing the University's central administrative facilities; an observer later noted that "the University has never in the whole course of its existence paid any rent or rates or taxes in respect of the buildings it has occupied for its chief administrative work, and the Government has also paid for structural repairs."<sup>10</sup>

In the meantime, the establishment of universities with more modern curricula in London and Durham, and the founding of a college with no religious restrictions, had combined to provide critics of the old order at Oxford and Cambridge with concrete bases for comparison. Increasing complaints were heard that the ancient universities no longer conformed to the spirit of the age.

#### THE REFORM OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITIES

According to Trevelyan, the impotence of Oxford and Cambridge in the higher spheres of intellect and research "must eventually have ruined the country in peace and in war, when matched against foreign rivals who valued scientific and educational progress. The timely reform of Oxford and Cambridge by Act of Parliament saved the situation."<sup>11</sup>

Aside from the establishment at Cambridge, in 1747, of a school of study in mathematics, the eighteenth century had passed with practically no major constructive changes at either university. One description of Oxford in 1800 included the following remarks:

Lectures were *offered* by some of the more active of the inert, almost moribund, professoriate, but they were seldom *delivered*. . . . Almost every man . . . who held office did so by favour . . . . The undergraduate was abandoned to the tutor, who, even if he were energetic, seldom knew much beyond the classics and logic. . . . The Church was the only career for which the University made any general attempt, not so much to educate students, as to provide them with superficial qualifications. There was no desire to widen the area of influence by drawing undergraduates other than the well-born to the Colleges. . . . [The examination] prescribed by the Laudian Statutes had become a farce, just as the Disputations conducted in bad Latin had become almost ridiculous. The candidate for a Degree in Arts, . . . allowed to choose his own examiners, . . . could, and often did, select a couple of young M.A.'s whom he'd entertained at a feast the night before. The examiners were expected to ask, and did ask, traditional questions, the answers to which were learned by heart from schemes. [Emphasis added.]<sup>12</sup>

On the evidence of such a description, it would seem most unlikely that anything very meritorious could have emerged from within the

<sup>10</sup> Humberstone, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

<sup>11</sup> G. M. Trevelyan, *British History in the Nineteenth Century* (1922), p. 355.

<sup>12</sup> Albert Mansbridge, *The Older Universities of England—Oxford and Cambridge* (1923), pp. 150–151.

universities; yet the same author goes on to speak of "the paradox that out of these places of gluttony, where intrigue and ignorance were the order of the day, there arose fine scholars and distinguished men of affairs."<sup>13</sup>

In the opening decades of the nineteenth century many of these "fine scholars" were working to achieve university reform from within, but their progress was for the most part confined to revisions of the curriculum and of the examination system, for university organization and religious tests were enmeshed in the difficult question of statutory reform. "The latter [path, statutory reform] was impassable for all but the most acute legal minds, inspired by determined zeal, [but the path of curricular reform] was well trod during the years 1800-1850."<sup>14</sup>

At Oxford in 1800, for example, several heads of colleges were able to bring about a new examination for the degree in arts which, by giving First- and Second-Class Honours to candidates who distinguished themselves, rewarded industry and ability. In 1824 Cambridge added its field of study in the classics. At Oxford, Balliol and Oriel Colleges threw open "to all comers" their scholarships and fellowships respectively, and New College was persuaded in 1834 to abandon the right of its fellows to obtain the University's degree without examination. In 1850 Oxford added two new areas of study, physical science, and law and modern history, while Cambridge introduced those of natural science and moral science.

During the first half of the century the university and college statutes continued to exclude non-Anglicans from the universities and to restrict many of the fellowships to applicants from particular regions, schools, or even, very rarely, families. Furthermore, university rules permitting the paying of fees to count as statutory residence resulted in a widespread "absentee ownership" of fellowships. With sinecure fellowships thus permitted, and with untold numbers of intelligent Dissenters excluded, it is understandable that criticisms of the universities were mounting.

Yet two factors, one "political" and the other "legal," operated to block the revision of these obsolete statutes. Politically, the reforming minority within the universities had to face an all-powerful hierarchy with a vested interest in the administrative status quo. A contemporary observer shrewdly noted:

But it is not in the power of individuals to persuade a body of men in opposition to their interest; and even if the whole actual membership of the Hebdomadal meeting [i.e. the college heads] were satisfied of the dishonest character of the policy

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155.



hitherto pursued, and personally anxious to reverse it; we can easily conceive that they might find it invidious to take upon themselves to condemn so deeply so many generations of their predecessors, and a matter of delicacy to surrender, on behalf of the collegial interest, but in opposition to its wishes, the valuable monopoly it has so long been permitted without molestation to enjoy. In this conflict of delicacy, interest and duty, the Heads themselves ought to desire—ought to invoke, the interposition of a higher authority.<sup>15</sup>

The legal obstacle was that, even if the heads of the colleges had been willing to use their powers for altering the statutes, there would have remained some paradoxical technicalities in the law. For example, Trinity College, Cambridge, faced the following dilemma: "The oath of the Fellows seemed to preclude the possibility of inviting or accepting any external interference; yet there was a certain awkwardness in employing their own authority to bring about an alteration of that which they had bound themselves to preserve and execute."<sup>16</sup> And when New College, Oxford, called in its Visitor for help in this matter, he "informed the College, after taking legal advice, that . . . certain things might lawfully be done . . . [but that only] Parliament could modify the Statutes."<sup>17</sup>

Thus, when Sir William Hamilton, in the 1830's, opened his famous campaign in the *Edinburgh Review* for a revision of the Oxford and Cambridge statutes, he recognized the inability of the universities to make this revision themselves and accordingly urged the state to intervene. Writing of Oxford, he commented:

A Royal or Parliamentary visitation is the easy and appropriate way of solving the difficulty. . . . [Earlier] the University possessed within itself the ordinary means of reform; Convocation frequently appointed delegates to enquire into abuses, and to take counsel for the welfare and melioration of the establishment. But by bestowing on a private body, like the Heads, the exclusive guardianship of the Statutes, and the initiative of every legal measure, Convocation was deprived of the power of active interference. . . . To the administrators of the State, rather than . . . [those] of the University are thus primarily to be attributed the corruptions of Oxford. To them, likewise, must we look for their removal. The Crown is, in fact, bound, in justice to the nation, to restore the University against the consequences of its own imprudence and neglect.<sup>18</sup>

Hamilton's main arguments, later called "a splendid piece of reasoned invective,"<sup>19</sup> were directed against contentions like that earlier

<sup>15</sup> Sir William Hamilton, *Discussions on Philosophy* . . . (1853), p. 471.

<sup>16</sup> Mansbridge, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Hamilton, *op. cit.*, pp. 471–472; this book includes a collection of his earlier articles in the *Edinburgh Review*.

<sup>19</sup> Lewis Campbell, *On the Nationalisation of the Ancient Universities* (1903), p. 39.

voiced by Bishop Copleston of Oxford, who stated that "the University of Oxford is not a national foundation; it is a congeries of foundations, originating some in royal munificence, but more in private piety and bounty."<sup>20</sup> In rebuttal, Hamilton pointed out:

Oxford and Cambridge . . . consist of two parts, —of the *University proper*, and the *Colleges*. The former, original and essential, is founded, controlled and privileged by public authority for the advantage of the nation. The latter, accessory and contingent, are created, regulated and endowed by private munificence, for the interest of certain favoured individuals. Time was, when the Colleges did not exist, and the University was there; and were the Colleges again abolished, the University would remain entire. The former, founded solely for education, exists only as it accomplishes the end of its institution; the latter, founded principally for aliment and habitation, would still exist were all education abandoned within their walls. The University, as a national establishment, is necessarily open to the lieges in general; the Colleges, as private institutions, might universally do, as some have actually done, close their gates upon all, except their foundation members. [Italics in original.]<sup>21</sup>

Hamilton, as an old Balliol man himself, admitted that the collegiate and tutorial systems offered many unique educational values. But he urged that, without abolishing the colleges, the University and the professorial system should be strengthened, and that Dissenters should be accepted as noncollegiate students, to be housed in halls or hostels such as had thrived at Oxford up to the time of the Reformation.

Hamilton's proposals, of which only a part are presented here, initiated a storm of discussion in the reform-minded 1830's; more than thirty pamphlets on the admission of Dissenters to the universities were published in 1834 alone.<sup>22</sup> Most of the supporters of reform stressed the argument that the universities were national institutions, whereas opponents of governmental intervention emphasized the value of university autonomy and the danger that "an unscrupulous Minister [might] use the prerogative of the Crown against the religion and liberties of this country."<sup>23</sup>

In 1834 a petition for the admission of Dissenters to eligibility for all degrees except those in divinity was presented to Parliament from Cambridge, where about one-third of the residents, including two heads of colleges and nine professors, had signed it. Dr. Thomas Arnold circulated a variant of this at Oxford, but found no such favorable response. In the Commons a bill was introduced embodying the contents

<sup>20</sup> Dr. Copleston of Oriel College, Oxford, replying to an 1808 attack: "A Reply to the Calumnies of the *Edinburgh Review* against Oxford" (1810), as quoted in A. I. Tillyard, *History of University Reform* (1913), p. 26.

<sup>21</sup> Hamilton, *op. cit.*, p. 404.

<sup>22</sup> Campbell, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-42.

<sup>23</sup> G. E. Corrice, *Brief Historical Notice of the Interference of the Crown in the Affairs of the English Universities* (1839), as quoted in Mansbridge, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

of the petition and, "amid a scene of clamour and disorder," was passed by a large majority (185 to 44). Among the opponents were Sir Robert Peel and William Gladstone; the latter, then Oxford University's representative, arguing that "the Universities are undoubtedly national institutions, but only in so far as they are connected with the National Church."<sup>24</sup> In the House of Lords, however, the fate of the bill was very different, for there the Duke of Wellington and the archbishops could rally a majority to the cause of "the Church in danger." It was rejected by a vote of 187 to 85, and "the keenness of the first reforming impulse was abated."<sup>25</sup>

Reform attempts nonetheless continued, and the year 1837 saw motions in both the Commons and the Lords proposing the appointment of commissions to enquire into the state of the universities and colleges at Oxford and Cambridge.<sup>26</sup> These motions were both withdrawn after the Duke of Wellington and others close to the universities had intimated that these institutions were ready, with the help of their Visitors, to reform themselves. As it happened, however, reform was more easily promised than achieved, for change of any kind was staunchly resisted by the entrenched conservatives. One of them, Dean Burgon, Fellow of Oriel College, wrote:

I can but fear the worst, a majority of fourteen in Convocation voted in favour of the establishment of a fourth school—namely Modern History. We did indeed by large majority reject the details of this novelty, but the principle has been admitted—yielded to pressure from without—and I can but think it is a most dangerous step.... We all flatter ourselves that we are in the most conservative trim, but rightly or wrongly we have fallen into the weakness of yielding to the spirit of the age.<sup>27</sup>

As many of the reformers were inspired by the example of professorial vitality in German universities, national pride formed another basis for the opposition. The alleged desire to emulate the Germans later occasioned the following verse in reaction:

Professors we, from over the sea,  
From the land where Professors in plenty be;  
And we thrive and flourish, as well we may,  
In the land that produced one Kant with a K,  
And many Cants with a C.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>24</sup> British Parliamentary Papers, *Parliamentary Debates* (Hansard; hereafter cited as *Parl. Deb.*), 3d ser., Vol. 25 (1834), col. 636, House of Commons (hereafter cited as Commons).

<sup>25</sup> Tillyard, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> A letter of December 7, 1849, as quoted in Mansbridge, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

<sup>28</sup> R. Mansell of St. John's, Oxford, "Phrontisterion," as quoted in Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

Strong though the conservative academicians were within the universities, the tide began slowly to turn against them in the 1840's. Their friends in Parliament defeated further attempts in 1843 and 1845 to introduce university reform bills,<sup>29</sup> but could not stop the ground swell of self-examination and self-criticism which began sweeping through Oxford and Cambridge themselves in the latter half of the decade. The way for this latitudinarianism was further cleared by the reaction to the Tractarian movement at Oxford, for the claim of Newman in the famous Tract No. 90 that he could hold Roman Catholic doctrines without violating the Thirty-nine Articles had tended to undermine the position of those High Anglicans at the universities who opposed any alterations in the religious tests on the grounds that these tests protected the purity of the Established Church. What "protection" was there when Dissenters were excluded, but "Papists" could fellow-travel?

Finally, there was a reaction among the academicians away from the endless theological speculation traditionally associated with the ancient universities and toward a consideration of practical university problems. One Oxford don later commented on this change:

If any Oxford man had gone to sleep in 1840 and had wakened up in 1850 he would have found himself in a totally new world. In 1840 we were in old Tory Oxford, not somnolent, because it was as fiercely debating as in the days of Henry IV its eternal Church question. There were Tory majorities in all the colleges; there was unquestioning satisfaction in the tutorial system, i.e. one man teaching everybody everything. . . . In 1850 all this was changed as by the wand of a magician. The dead majorities of Heads and seniors which had sat like lead on the energies of young tutors had melted away. Theology was totally banished from the Common Room and even from private conversation. Very free opinions on all subjects were rife, there was a prevailing dissatisfaction with our boasted tutorial system. A restless fever of change had spread through the Colleges—the wonder-working phrase "University reform" had been uttered and that in the House of Commons. The sound seemed to breathe new life into us. We against reform! Why it was the very thing we had been so long sighing for; we were ready to reform a great deal—everything—only show us how to set about it and give us the necessary powers.<sup>30</sup>

In 1850 the climax to all the agitation occurred. Mr. James Heywood introduced a resolution in the Commons proposing a royal commission of enquiry into the state of Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin Universities, "with a view to assisting in the adaptation of these important institutions to the requirements of modern times."<sup>31</sup> Sensing, perhaps, that this motion, if left to a free vote, stood little chance of being passed,

<sup>29</sup> For further details, see Campbell, *op. cit.*, pp. 49–52.

<sup>30</sup> Mark Pattison, *Memoirs* (1885), pp. 244–245.

<sup>31</sup> *Parl. Deb.*, 3d ser., Vol. 110 (1850), cols. 691 ff., Commons.

Lord John Russell, the Prime Minister, surprised the House and the royal family by announcing that the Government would, on its own initiative and without a parliamentary vote, advise Her Majesty to appoint royal commissions for the universities at Oxford and Cambridge. Prince Albert, as Chancellor of Cambridge, was in a most compromised position: not able, under British constitutional practices, to urge his wife to reject her chief minister's advice, and yet committed to the defense of the University's basic freedoms. His attempts to mediate brought him only the scorn of the conservative academicians.<sup>32</sup>

Protests were immediately raised by the universities over the legality and wisdom of appointing commissions of enquiry by simple virtue of the royal prerogative, but the Prime Minister was not deterred. He sent letters to Prince Albert and to Oxford's chancellor, the Duke of Wellington,<sup>33</sup> explaining the voluntary nature of the commissions and promising that "the utmost care [would] be taken in selecting Commissioners . . ."<sup>34</sup>

Such assurances were not sufficient for the university conservatives, however, and remonstrances were addressed to the two chancellors, protesting against this interference with the universities' internal freedom, an interference "of a kind utterly unheard of except in the worst times, and altogether destructive of just and ancient corporate rights."<sup>35</sup> Cambridge protested further that no royal commission was necessary there, as her Senate had in 1849 already created a Syndicate to undertake revision of the University statutes, and in the following year had renewed its authorization.

Defenders of university independence (among them, William Gladstone, Member of Parliament from Oxford University<sup>36</sup>) argued that the universities should be allowed to continue reforming themselves, however slowly, and on this basis, the Opposition in the Commons pressed the Government for a special debate on the proposed appoint-

<sup>32</sup> Roger Fulford, *The Prince Consort* (1949), pp. 199-200.

<sup>33</sup> Perhaps there had been "method" in the choice of these distinguished persons to be chancellor: "Nor had the Universities neglected the more obvious means of resisting the attacks of their assailants. Oxford had secured as her Chancellor the Great Duke, who was said to command majorities in the House of Lords, while Cambridge, wiser, as she fancied, had wooed and won the protection of Royalty itself, and felt safe under the shadow of the Throne." W. M. Campion, "Commissioners and Colleges," in *Cambridge Essays* (1858), p. 158.

<sup>34</sup> Letter of May 8, 1850, as quoted in Oxford University Commission, *Report of the Commissioners* (1852), Appendix A, pp. 1-5.

<sup>35</sup> Oxford University Commission, *Report . . .* (1852), Appendix B. For a further discussion of the legal questions involved, see p. 114 below.

<sup>36</sup> John Morley, in his book, *The Life of William Ewart Gladstone* (1903), comments that Gladstone's defense of the universities was his "last manifesto, on a high theme and a broad scale, of that toryism from which this wonderful pilgrim had started on his shining progress." Vol. I, p. 498.

ment of the commissions of enquiry. In this debate, however, the Government convinced most of its supporters that piecemeal reform efforts, such as those at Cambridge, could never resolve effectively the over-all university problems, and the challenge was rebuffed by twenty-two votes.<sup>37</sup> On August 31, 1850, therefore, separate Royal Commissions were appointed for Oxford and Cambridge, and the "first step" was thus taken in the "long journey towards the nationalisation of the universities and the disestablishment of the Church of England in what seemed the best fortified of all her strongholds."<sup>38</sup>

The next thirty-two years were to witness a prodigious amount of governmental debate and legislation on the reform of Oxford and Cambridge Universities. A complete description of the deliberations and actions on university reform between 1850 and 1882 would include the following subtopics: the mid-century Royal Commission reports; the Oxford University Act of 1854 and the Cambridge University Act of 1856 based on these reports; the Statutory Commissions appointed under the terms of the 1854 and 1856 acts; the University Education Act of 1867; the nearly annual attempts in the Commons in the 1860's to abolish the last traces of the university religious tests; the Universities Tests Act of 1871, accomplishing this purpose; the Royal Commission report of 1873 on Oxford and Cambridge university finances; the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act of 1877, based on this report; and, finally, the work of the Statutory Commissioners through 1882, based on the 1877 act.

These various matters, viewed retrospectively in mass, constitute a continuous whole and will be treated as such here. An involved step-by-step analysis of the political developments occurring between 1850 and 1882 has been omitted<sup>39</sup> in favor of presenting a few observations on selected episodes and listing the cumulative results of governmental interventions during the thirty-two-year period.

Events commenced badly in 1850 when the indignant Oxford heads consulted counsel on the legality of the Royal Commission and were confirmed, by their counsel's opinion, in their determination to give no evidence and to yield no information.<sup>40</sup> Although Lord Russell had answered the critics who questioned the Commissions' legality by assuring them that the Commissions would possess no powers to compel testi-

<sup>37</sup> *Parl. Deb.*, 3d ser., Vol. 112 (1850), cols. 1495 ff., Commons.

<sup>38</sup> Morley, *op. cit.*, I, 497.

<sup>39</sup> For such a step-by-step analysis, see Tillyard, *op. cit.*, chapters vi-ix. For the more legal aspects, see A. V. Dicey, *Law and Public Opinion in England* (1914), Appendix III.

<sup>40</sup> The opinion of Oxford's legal counsel is included in the Oxford University Commission's *Report* . . . (1852), Appendix B, p. 21.

mony, the Royal Proclamation, when issued, included the usual wording about sending for persons and papers, and this served only to infuriate the critics all the more. Oxford then addressed a petition to Her Majesty in Council, urging that the appointment of the Commission be rescinded; but this petition was rejected by the Queen on the advice of her Councilors.<sup>41</sup>

Not everyone at Oxford and Cambridge refused to testify: men like Benjamin Jowett,<sup>42</sup> A. P. Stanley,<sup>43</sup> Mark Pattison,<sup>44</sup> and Goldwin Smith<sup>45</sup> formed the nucleus of a sizable university reform group which provided detailed testimony to the Commissioners. On the basis of such testimony, the two Commissions were able to complete reports, of which the one on Oxford, at least, so impressed Mr. Gladstone that he not only became favorable to parliamentary intervention, but even consented to draft the subsequent reforming legislation himself.<sup>46</sup> The chief theme of the two reports is typified by the Oxford Commissioners' emphatic statement that

... such an institution [as the University] cannot be regarded as a mere aggregation of private interests; it is *eminently national*. It would seem, therefore, to be a matter of public policy that such measures should be taken as may serve to raise its efficiency to the highest point and to diffuse its benefits most widely.<sup>47</sup>

Lack of official coöperation by the universities was not the only barrier to successful reform by royal commission; for, once the Commissions had made their reports, based though these necessarily were on incomplete information, the inevitable process of political compromise and attrition began in Parliament:

... the two bodies of Commissioners went to the furthest point [of reform] in their recommendations, the Bill as introduced by Lord John Russell fell short of the [se] recommendations, the Act which was passed fell short of the Bill, and the subsequently appointed [Statutory] Commissioners were unable to make the best of the Act.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35. This petition was rejected on July 17, 1851.

<sup>42</sup> Evelyn Abbott and Lewis Campbell, *The Life and Letters of Benjamin Jowett* (1897), Vol. I, chapter vi: "University and Civil Service Reform."

<sup>43</sup> R. E. P. Erle, *The Life and Correspondence of Arthur Penrhyn Stanley* (1894), I, 432.

<sup>44</sup> Pattison, *op. cit.*, pp. 244-245.

<sup>45</sup> Goldwin Smith, *Reorganisation of the University of Oxford* (1868).

<sup>46</sup> "Mr. Gladstone thought [the Oxford Report] one of the ablest productions submitted in his recollection to parliament. . . . In the late autumn of 1853 he set to work [on the Oxford University bill]. In none of the enterprises of his life was he more industrious or energetic." Morley, *op. cit.*, I, 499 and 500. But when Gladstone proposed, Disraeli, his arch rival, opposed: "You will have much to answer for if you place the Universities of this country under the control of the State." *Parl. Deb.*, 3d ser., Vol. 132 (1854), col. 975, Commons.

<sup>47</sup> Oxford University Commission, *Report* . . . (1852), Preface.

<sup>48</sup> Tillyard, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

There were, therefore, important aspects of "unfinished business" to be dealt with in succeeding years, principally those concerning religious tests and the use of college funds for the endowment of university teaching. The first of these, as has been mentioned above, was finally settled by the Universities Tests Act of 1871, but the latter required the creation of another royal commission in 1872. This time, however, the Prime Minister, Mr. Gladstone, sounded out the universities ahead of time and was assured that "every facility and assistance [would] be afforded in order to render the enquiry effectual."<sup>49</sup>

Mark Pattison, an interested observer of these events, interpreted the change of attitude in this way:

In 1854 the House of Commons, after many threats and long hesitation, made its onslaught on the Universities, or rather on the Colleges. It was a fair stand-up fight between these wealthy and powerful societies and the representatives of the nation. The issue may be said to have been a drawn battle. The Colleges were not remodelled, nor did they lose a shilling of their property. On the other hand, the assailant made good his claim to overhaul and legislate. Everyone felt that this first baffled attempt was but a prelude. We are now (1876) in the middle of the Second Punic War, and no one can fail to see the importance of the advantage gained by the attacking party in the first. In 1854 we disputed the right of interference, and invoked our charters and the sacredness of private property. This ground is no longer taken. The cry of "spoliation" is no longer raised. We take as a matter of course the taking away of the property of the Colleges and giving it to the University, and no one is shocked or so much as hints at "confiscation."<sup>50</sup>

By 1882, with the completion of the work undertaken by the last Statutory Commission, it was possible to delineate the principal changes in university life and structure brought about by government reform efforts since 1850.

First, the powers of the universities, as distinct from those of the colleges, had been strengthened and at the same time made less oligarchical. The administrative dominance of the heads of colleges was broken in favor of more representative bodies; college revenues were partly diverted for university purposes; the language of the statutes was changed from Latin to English and they were made easier to revise; it was ruled that the deliberations of administrative bodies were in future to be conducted in English rather than Latin; and university officers and faculty members were freed from oaths which prevented them from disclosing information about the statutes.

Next, there were far-reaching changes in the fellowship and scholarship systems. Family, school, regional, and religious restrictions were

<sup>49</sup> The Universities Commission, *Report of the Commissioners* (1873), p. 5.

<sup>50</sup> Mark Pattison, *Essays on the Endowment of Research* (1876), pp. 2-3.



removed, ordination and celibacy requirements and life fellowships were abolished, and many new scholarships were established, open to "merit" in line with the current trend in Civil Service reform.

Then the curriculum and teaching system received large-scale modifications. Some of the diverted college revenues were used to meet the need for new and neglected studies, the professorial system was greatly enlarged, new areas of study and additional chairs were created, and libraries and museums were strengthened.

Religious restrictions, excepting those for degrees in divinity (which followed suit in the twentieth century), were completely removed. No religious tests were required for an applicant to matriculate, to attain the baccalaureate or a higher degree, to teach within the universities, or to hold university office.

Finally, attempts were made to attract to the universities bright young men from the working classes. Students were allowed to affiliate with the universities on a nonecollegiate basis, and university halls, providing residence but not tutoring, were sanctioned. All students were to be deemed eligible for "open" scholarships.

By the time that the broad implications of the reform movement had become apparent, most observers inside and outside the universities were ready to admit that great improvements had resulted. Archbishop Tait, perhaps prejudiced as a member of the Oxford Commission of 1850, later commented on the value of royal commissions:

It was desirable that a little external pressure should be brought to bear upon the Universities. . . . It would not do to trust either the Universities or the Colleges with the entire management of the reforms, for . . . they were not an exception to the rule which had been found to exist elsewhere, that hardly any corporation was capable of entirely reforming itself without external pressure.<sup>51</sup>

Enthusiasm for the use of royal commissions was not unanimous, however, even among the supporters of university reform. For instance, Mark Pattison criticized them for their intermittent and political character:

It must be among the duties of Government, under its responsibilities to the nation, to watch *unintermittently* over the University, and to see that it does in practice efficiently discharge the functions assigned to it. If the Legislature only steps in when crying abuses have been accumulated, it is hardly possible that justice will be done by a popular assembly, heated with previous struggles between those who exaggerate in denouncing, and those who exaggerate in defending, the abuse. The University submits with discontent as to a tyrannical intruder, and the Legislature,

<sup>51</sup> *Parl. Deb.*, 3d ser., Vol. 227 (1876), col. 804, House of Lords (hereafter referred to in the notes as Lords).

unacquainted from disuse with the matter on which it has to legislate, gladly escapes from an unwelcome task by an Act, which passed, it dismisses the subject for an indefinite period. [Emphasis added.]<sup>52</sup>

Other critics expressed dissatisfaction about the way in which some of the reforms were working out in practice. For one thing, the number of "poor scholars," far from being increased as the Commissions had hoped, was actually reduced even further by the "open competition" which tested attainment rather than aptitude. Few bright lads with an inferior charity-school background could compete successfully for scholarships, even against mediocre rivals, when the latter had been taught in the charmed atmosphere of the "public schools," considered by many to offer the best preparatory education in the world. A further criticism of the effects of reform concerned the governing boards and boards of faculties, which did not appear to be fulfilling the high hopes of their creators.

These and other shortcomings later led Lord Curzon, Chancellor of Oxford, to offer several reasons why royal commissions were not necessarily the best means of university reform:<sup>53</sup>

1) The royal commissions, while bringing about much valuable reform, also create some institutions which produced results very different from those anticipated by the commissioners.

2) When the political process is used for university reform,

... no one can say in advance which of all suggested or feasible reforms will commend themselves to a small body of Commissioners, however able or impartial; or what is still more important, to the Government that may be called on to act on their Report, or to the Parliament that may deal with the bill of the Government. There is always the risk that some element of politics or partisanship may intrude; while, in the last resort, the changes introduced bear the inevitable stamp of exterior compulsion, and are apt to be endowed with the rigidity of statute law.

3) University activities are necessarily held up and endowments diminished during the four to five years of a royal commission's existence.

4) There is the strong possibility that the university has within itself the means of, and the will to, self-reform.

It should be noted, in partial justification of this last point, that Oxford and Cambridge engaged in a flurry of progressive activities during the last three decades of the nineteenth century, all in connection with items unmentioned in earlier Royal Commission reports.<sup>54</sup> First, Cambridge in 1873, immediately followed by Oxford, took up the Uni-

<sup>52</sup> Mark Pattison, *Suggestions on Academic Organisation* (1868), pp. 20-21.

<sup>53</sup> Lord Curzon of Kedleston, *Principles and Methods of University Reform* (1909), pp. 10-11.

<sup>54</sup> Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge Universities, *Report of the Commissioners* (1922), p. 41.

versity Extension movement, a program in which university teachers were sent out to various provincial cities to lecture to large classes, usually composed of adults. A special administrative section was created in each university to handle the problems of Extension examinations, teaching, and so forth. Related to this activity were the Vacation Schools, conducted at both universities during the summer recesses for the benefit of Extension students who wished to experience at least a brief residence at one of the universities. Separately administered from the Extension movement, but of a similar nature, were the Tutorial Classes, in which a more personal tuition was offered to smaller groups. These were established at both universities in coöperation with the Workers' Educational Association.

Finally, both Oxford and Cambridge had begun to admit women during the 1870's, although full equality of status, including a share in university government for women faculty members, was not granted them until much later—at Cambridge, in fact, as late as the 1940's.

Even with so much voluntary reform and expansion to their credit, Oxford and Cambridge did not escape the continued critical scrutiny of certain persons and groups, whose appetite for change seemed unending. An observer later pointed out (in 1923):

There has never been a year since 1882 . . . during which [Oxford and Cambridge] have been free from new demands and criticisms. "We are led by Commissions," so runs the complaint of the *Oxford Magazine* in 1886; "we are lashed by the magazines; we are pulverized by the ferocious rhetoric of the larger Reviews."<sup>5</sup>

Part of this criticism stemmed from the political awakening of the working classes. Just as, in the early nineteenth century, the claims of the rising merchant class, usually Whigs and often Dissenters, were successfully pressed against the landholding, High Church Tories who held a privileged position in state and university, so now, at the opening of the twentieth century and after successive reforms of the franchise, the working classes began to advance their demands for equal access to government and higher education. In the House of Lords in 1907, Dr. Charles Gore, Bishop of Birmingham, "took advantage of the recent [1905] advent of a Radical Ministry to power, and the increased representation of Socialists in the House of Commons,"<sup>6</sup> to move the appointment of yet another royal commission for Oxford and Cambridge, "in order to secure their best use for all classes of the community." Bishop Gore added, "I venture to think that there can be no reasonable doubt that at present our ancient Universities are

<sup>5</sup> Mansbridge, *op. cit.* (in n. 12, above), p. 197.

<sup>6</sup> J. A. R. Marriott, *Oxford: Its Place in National History* (1933), p. 183.

allowed to become, to an extent altogether beyond what ought to be tolerated, a playground for the sons of the wealthier classes."<sup>57</sup>

In the debate on this motion, the Government indicated a desire to know what university opinion was and "whether there did exist at the Universities anything like a dead weight of obstruction against reforms which could only be removed by Statute."<sup>58</sup> As if in answer to this query, Lord Curzon, Chancellor of Oxford, in 1909 wrote *The Principles and Methods of University Reform*, in which he listed the reasons against a royal commission quoted earlier (see p. 36) and proposed various projects of university self-reform. He subsequently attempted to push through some of these proposals, but the outbreak of war in 1914 diverted attention and energies elsewhere before any substantial changes had taken place.

The war's impact on Oxford and Cambridge, as on the other universities, was disastrous. Normal educational activities were almost entirely suspended. "Oxford was converted into a camp and a hospital. By the end of 1917 there were only 315 students in residence, of whom 30 were medical students and about 120 were members of the Officers' Training Corps, waiting for admission to Cadet battallions."<sup>59</sup>

The leadership furnished to the nation by university graduates and students, and the heavy loss of life sustained from amongst their ranks, are facts well known. A less dramatic contribution of the universities, but one of more significance to this study, was the great body of scientific knowledge which they made available to the nation, at a time when warfare was becoming increasingly technical."

In 1918 the necessity to make up for the stagnation of the war years, to establish facilities for teaching new scientific disciplines which had more recently emerged, and to absorb the large backlog of students qualified to matriculate, made it imperative for Oxford and Cambridge to join the list of other institutions of higher education that had been receiving national aid, some of them since 1889. For the ancient universities, although the annual amounts were initially quite small (£30,000), this was a radical change of principle. The small piecemeal grants of national funds which Oxford and Cambridge had previously received for curricular activities deemed of value to the government (e.g., for language instruction and scientific research) had always been given *ad hoc* to the particular department concerned, and had

<sup>57</sup> *Parl. Deb.*, 4th ser., Vol. 178 (1907), col. 1495, Lords.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, col. 1555.

<sup>59</sup> Marriott, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

<sup>60</sup> Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge Universities, *Report . . .* (1922), pp. 47-48.

not entailed the inspection and report by government-appointed officials which was required in the case of the other universities for the general grants which they received from the state.

To make matters worse, the government, before agreeing to commence recurrent grants to Oxford and Cambridge, had to take cognizance of continuing criticisms in Parliament that the living standards at these universities were too luxurious for poor scholars; it therefore announced that "if Oxford and Cambridge desire further financial assistance from the state on a large scale, a comprehensive enquiry into the resources of the universities and colleges, and the use made of them, will be necessary."<sup>81</sup>

Oxford and Cambridge, after some complaints by the humanists that the insatiable needs of science had forced the once proud colleges to humble themselves before the state, accepted these conditions, and the third Royal Commission on the ancient universities was appointed in 1919. The Government was careful to choose an "understanding" group of Commissioners, headed by Herbert H. (later Earl of) Asquith. The Commission, acknowledging its limited terms of reference, noted:

... unlike the Commissions of 1850 and 1872, [we were] appointed mainly on financial grounds. ... We have accordingly regarded as outside our province all questions of curriculum ... [and] internal government of Colleges ... except in so far as such questions are bound up with financial considerations or with the investigation of the relations between the Universities and the Colleges. ... Proposals have been submitted to us for alterations on a number of points with which we do not deal in this Report; we have felt that these questions must be left for discussion and settlement within the Universities, which have full power for dealing with them in any way that may seem advisable.<sup>82</sup>

Besides recommending that both universities be approved for regular national grants, the 1922 *Report* of the Commission led to the Oxford and Cambridge Act of 1923, which set up the usual Statutory Commissions. The Commons' debate on this measure, particularly on unsuccessful proposals to compel Cambridge to admit women to equal status, was about the last occasion on which political controversy raged over the universities.<sup>83</sup> The Statutory Commissions subsequently carried forward the work of restoring authority to the central university administrations, and also made several incidental reforms: the

<sup>81</sup> H. A. L. Fisher, President of the Board of Education, in *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, 5th ser., Vol. 116 (1919), col. 1708.

<sup>82</sup> Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge Universities, *Report* . . . (1922), pp. 7-8.

<sup>83</sup> This debate, including Major Falle's serious insistence on keeping the "colts" and "fillies" separated at Cambridge, is discussed at greater length below (see p. 173).

power of legislation was restricted to the Masters of Arts engaged in teaching or administration; all lectures became university lectures; all colleges were required to allot a definite proportion of their fellowships to university professors and lecturers; and more scholarships were made available to students of limited means.

With these innovations, the long series of direct governmental interventions in the affairs of Oxford and Cambridge came virtually to an end.<sup>64</sup> Relations between the state and the ancient universities were henceforth to be conducted almost exclusively in the broader context of government policy for the university system as a whole, expressed primarily through the University Grants Committee, which had been created in 1919. But to understand in what a very limited sense the term "university system" was appropriate in the 1920's, it is necessary to examine the evolution of the other English constituents of that system—the so-called modern universities.

#### THE EVOLUTION OF MODERN ENGLISH UNIVERSITIES

The vigorous efforts to reform higher education in the nineteenth century were not confined to Parliament and the ancient universities, for elsewhere in Britain other institutions were improved and new ones founded. The Scottish universities, for instance, received overhauls similar to those of Oxford and Cambridge, in reforming acts of 1858 and 1889.<sup>65</sup> In the provincial centers of England the civic universities which were founded in the last half of the century incorporated many of the reforms which the Royal Commissions had proposed for Oxford and Cambridge.

Durham University, too, was the object of governmental reform. In 1861, after "it had fallen on such evil times that only nineteen degrees and licences were conferred,"<sup>66</sup> Parliament passed the Durham University Act, which authorized a Statutory Commission with sweeping powers to modernize the curriculum and expand the faculty. In addition, in 1871 Durham was included, with Oxford and Cambridge, among the institutions affected by the Universities Tests Act, which abolished religious tests for all degrees except those in divinity.

Notwithstanding the reforms which had been introduced at Oxford and Cambridge by the 1860's, perceptive critics such as Matthew Arnold sensed that there was still at those universities an "indisposition

<sup>64</sup> There was a Universities and Colleges (Trust) Act of 1943 which permitted Oxford and Cambridge Universities greater flexibility in the administration of their trust funds.

<sup>65</sup> See John Kerr, *Scottish Education, School and University from Early Times to 1908* (1910), *passim*.

<sup>66</sup> Armytage, *op. cit.* (in n. 7, above), p. 212.

and incapacity for science, for systematic knowledge," which boded ill for the future of Britain. Arnold urged, therefore:

We must get out of our heads all notion of making the mass of students come and reside . . . at Oxford or Cambridge, which neither suit their circumstances nor offer them the instruction they want. We must plant faculties in the eight or ten principal seats of population, and let the students follow lectures there from their own homes with whatever arrangements for their living they and their parents choose. It would be everything for the great seats of population to be thus made intellectual centres as well as mere places of business.<sup>87</sup>

Several developments occurring in the last three decades of the century tended to reinforce Arnold's plea. For one thing, the need for technically trained people was growing rapidly. A Schools Enquiry Committee on Technical Instruction had reported in 1867 that "the field should be substantially cultivated—with state aid where necessary."<sup>88</sup>

Another factor assisting in the fulfillment of Arnold's hope for provincial universities was the establishment in several English cities of Oxford or Cambridge Extension centers, which later gradually developed into university colleges.

But the most important development contributing to the expansion of higher education in England was the long-postponed realization of a national system of primary and secondary education. A measure of 1870 stipulated that, in areas not provided for by voluntary societies, local school boards should be elected and should set up and manage elementary schools. By the end of the century, the transition had been made to free and compulsory elementary education for all.

In secondary education, three important national commissions paved the way for an extension of governmental responsibility: the Public Schools Commission (1861–1864) investigated the administration of the nine great "public schools"; the Schools Enquiry Commission (1864–1884) dealt with the other voluntary secondary schools; and the Bryce Commission (1894–1895) considered the best methods of establishing a well-organized system of secondary education in England. The work of the Bryce Commission culminated in the Education Act of 1902, which abolished the locally elected school boards, where existing, and made each Local Authority (whether or not voluntary societies were active in its jurisdiction) into the Local Education Authority, responsible for *all* education below the university level. These Local Education Authorities established new secondary schools where needed, and assumed the responsibility for the maintenance of

<sup>87</sup> Matthew Arnold, *Schools and Universities on the Continent* (1868), p. 276.

<sup>88</sup> Schools Enquiry Commission on Technical Instruction, *Report* (1867), p. 261.

many existing voluntary schools in return for control over secular instruction.

Because, then, of the increasing need for technically trained personnel, the establishment of several branches of the Oxford and Cambridge Extension programs, and the increasing supply of students qualified to matriculate, there was a rapid emergence of provincial university colleges in the last three decades of the century. To Owens College, which had first opened its doors at Manchester in 1851, were added: Newcastle, 1871; Leeds, 1874; Bristol, 1876; Nottingham, 1877; Birmingham, 1880; Liverpool, 1882; Reading, 1892; and Sheffield, 1897.

The typical pattern of development of these institutions has been described as

... the foundation, through the generosity of one or more private benefactors, of a college designed to teach chiefly scientific and technical subjects to the people of a great industrial town; the expansion of this into a university college by the addition of "faculties" in the humane subjects and a department for the training of teachers; and finally, the securing of a Royal Charter.<sup>66</sup>

As university colleges these institutions did not, of course, grant their own degrees, but, instead, prepared their students for the external degree of the University of London. In 1880, however, the Privy Council granted a charter for a federated Victoria University, and Owens College (later to become Manchester University) joined as its first affiliate. Liverpool followed as a second in 1884 and Leeds as a third in 1887. But this trinity was not to last beyond 1903, for the centrifugal forces of expanding universities and differing local pressures in those crucial years proved too strong for the advocates of federation, and the three institutions went their separate ways.

Meanwhile the University of London was in the throes of an internal struggle, with the contending forces so evenly divided that the state had to step in with a series of commissions and departmental committees. (The latter were nongovernmental groups formed at the behest of some national ministry to investigate subjects relevant to that ministry.) The main source of controversy lay in the University's special status as a nonteaching, examining body, granting its degrees equally to students who had studied at the London constituent colleges, or at the provincial colleges, or even completely on their own. The London colleges, since they enjoyed no preferential status within the University, had no formal representation in the Senate and exercised no direct influence on it.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>66</sup> H. C. Dent, *British Education* (1949), p. 28.

<sup>67</sup> Humberstone, *op. cit.* (in n. 6, above), p. 47.



Protracted disagreements between and within the University's two principal governing bodies over the exact nature and constitution of the proposed teaching university at London finally caused University and King's Colleges to lose patience and petition the Crown in 1887 to grant them a separate charter as Albert University. The Inns of Court, the Law Society, the Royal College of Physicians, and the Royal College of Surgeons were also to be associated with this new institution. In May, 1888, a Royal Commission known as the Selbourne Commission was appointed "to enquire whether any and what kind of new University or powers is or are required, for the advancement of higher education in London."<sup>71</sup> This Commission, reporting in 1889, recommended that "a reasonable time . . . be allowed to the Senate and Convocation to apply for a new Charter [for a teaching university], in which event . . . no other University should be established in London."<sup>72</sup>

At this point the affair took on the proportions of a full-scale melodrama. University and King's Colleges, rebuffed by the Royal Commission, attempted to override its chief recommendation by a direct appeal to the Privy Council for their new charter:

Without delay the Committee of the Privy Council sat to consider the draft Charter. . . . Twenty-three institutions presented cases and were represented by ten sets of counsel. . . . The decision of the Committee, delivered on 13 July 1891, was favourable to the petition of University and King's Colleges to found a new University for London.<sup>73</sup>

Under the College Charters Act of 1871, however, the draft charter had to lie on the table in Parliament for a period of thirty days. Within this time strong opposition developed, especially from the provincial colleges and the medical schools, which thought that their existing standing with the University of London might be unfavorably affected. On the other hand, an ancient institution in the City of London, Gresham College (not a university college), offered to co-operate in establishing the new university, and the proposed name was accordingly changed from Albert to Gresham University.<sup>74</sup>

On March 10, 1892, the day before the expiration of the thirty-day compulsory waiting period, the House of Commons resolved to ask Her Majesty to withhold consent to the proposed charter until after further consideration. Queen Victoria granted this request and appointed another Royal Commission in April. Two years later the

<sup>71</sup> University for London Commission (Selbourne Commission), *Report of the Royal Commissioners* (1889), subtitle.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xviii.

<sup>73</sup> Humberstone, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.

Commission reported, recommending that "there should be one university in London, not two, . . . and [that] the new university should be established by legislation."<sup>76</sup>

R. B. Haldane worked hard in the Commons to produce a bill acceptable to the two major factions within the University, but the defenders of the status quo resented his proposed change to a dual examination system, fearing that standards for internal students might thus be lowered and the University's reputation thereby injured. Haldane's bill was defeated in the House of Lords in 1896 and again, after its reintroduction, in 1897. Finally, with the help of governmental sponsorship, it became law in 1898.<sup>77</sup> The Statutory Commission created by this bill completed its work by 1900 and the University of London finally achieved the status of a teaching university.

As in the case of the earlier Royal Commissions on Oxford and Cambridge, the work of the London Commissions had consequences far beyond their immediate point of focus: "London's reorganisation was a prelude to further changes in the provincial colleges hitherto oriented towards it. Since London was now committed to cultivating and organising its own regional resources, it was but natural that provincial colleges should soon begin to claim that right as well."<sup>78</sup>

Thus, in quick succession, the following institutions all applied for and received university charters: Birmingham, 1900; Manchester and Liverpool (leaving Victoria University), 1903; Leeds (also from Victoria University, which then dissolved), 1904; Sheffield, 1905; and Bristol, 1906. Except for Reading University, which received its charter in 1926, no other institutions were granted university status until after World War II. In the meantime, Exeter in 1901 and Southampton in 1902 had been chartered as university colleges.

In addition to the state aid given since 1889 to most of these institutions (as university colleges), an indirect source of assistance developed near the beginning of the twentieth century which was to prove extremely helpful to many struggling young universities and university colleges: namely, the hundreds of state-subsidized teacher candidates who began to seek higher education in response to the expanding need for primary and secondary instructors after the passage of the Education Acts of 1870 and 1902, and later, between the wars, in reaction to the economic depression.

<sup>76</sup> Gresham University Commission, *Report of the Commissioners* (1894), p. xii.

<sup>77</sup> Sir Frederick Maurice, *Haldane* (1939), Vol. I, chapter v: "University Reform." Maurice notes that a Haldane speech in the Commons on this bill was considered by both Asquith and Chamberlain to be "almost the only case in their recollection in which a single speech had turned opinion in the House" (*ibid.*, p. 84).

<sup>78</sup> Armytage, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

The University of London meanwhile was the scene of further dispute. The issue now concerned the status of the newly chartered (1907) Imperial College of Science and Technology in London. Should it, as its own teachers and students desired, be constituted as an independent technological university, or should it be incorporated into the existing University of London? A new Royal Commission, with R. B. (later Lord) Haldane as chairman, was established in 1909 to work on this problem and the accompanying one of what administrative changes in the structure of the University might be necessitated by incorporation, if that should be recommended.

The Commission reported in 1913 and did recommend the incorporation of Imperial College into London University, as well as drastic constitutional changes within the University itself. Strong lay elements, it suggested, should be brought onto the ruling board, to accomplish what the vacillating academicians seemingly were not able to do.<sup>76</sup> But the work of a Departmental Committee of the Board (later the Ministry) of Education established in that same year to carry out the Commission's recommendations, was interrupted by the outbreak of war, and the matter was not further acted on until 1924, when another Departmental Committee was appointed to reëxamine the Haldane Commission recommendations in the light of the altered postwar circumstances.

The second Departmental Committee reported in 1926,<sup>77</sup> discarding most of the Haldane recommendations, in recognition of the more vigorous postwar condition of the constituent colleges. Since they now had enlarged enrollments and increased national aid, they apparently no longer needed external prodding to get under way with a well-integrated program. The Statutory Commission created by the subsequent University of London Act of 1926 welded the University into an administrative whole, governed by a Court that was almost evenly balanced between University and outside interests. This Court was given power to distribute the block grants awarded by the University Grants Committee and the London County Council.

Another recommendation of the 1913 Haldane Commission had initiated a separate series of negotiations between the government and the University. The government, which, it may be remembered, had always borne a special responsibility for housing the central administrative offices of the University, was urged to provide a large building as University headquarters, in order to facilitate the work

<sup>76</sup> Royal Commission on University Education in London, *Fifth Report of the Commissioners* (1913).

<sup>77</sup> Departmental Committee on the University of London, *Report* (1926).

of the central administrative staff and enhance the University's internal cohesion and public appearance. After the war, the government offered the University an 11½-acre site behind the British Museum in Bloomsbury, plus £370,000 to induce King's College to relinquish its Somerset House location and move to the new site. However, King's did not relish the move under these conditions and the government offer was withdrawn. Fortunately, the Rockefeller Foundation donated £400,000 to London University in 1927, and the government supplied an extra £212,000, with the result that the site was acquired and the construction of the imposing Senate Building was started in 1933.<sup>80</sup> The ephemeral spirit of the University had finally assumed both its constitutional and its physical forms.

The final Royal Commission relevant to this study<sup>81</sup> came into existence in 1934, when a dispute over the relationship between the University of Durham's constituent institutions at Durham and Newcastle necessitated governmental intervention. Once again the reforming instrument, in this case the University of Durham Act of 1935, authorized the appointment of Statutory Commissioners, who, in turn, created a new constitution on the basis of the Royal Commission *Report*. The Newcastle School of Medicine and Armstrong College were combined to form King's College, Newcastle, and this was made into a constituent college of the University of Durham. Finally, a University Court was established to govern the reorganized University.

With these interwar reforms, *ad hoc* governmental interventions in the affairs of the modern universities ended, as they had earlier for Oxford and Cambridge, and relations between them and the state were henceforth to take place in the broader context of national policy for the university system as a whole.

#### INITIAL TRENDS TOWARD A "UNIVERSITY SYSTEM"

In view of the vast differences in their histories, traditions, social prestige, curricula, mode of teaching, and student residence accommodations, it is not surprising that there was originally very little sense of unity among the universities. Oxford and Cambridge tended to work out their own destinies in near-total disregard for developments in other institutions.

But during the second and third decades of the twentieth century, several developments helped to promote somewhat closer interuniversity coördination. As an initial step, the British universities coöper-

<sup>80</sup> Lord Beveridge tells the inside story of this development in his autobiography, *Power and Influence* (1953), chapter ix.

<sup>81</sup> There was a later Royal Commission for St. Andrews University, Scotland.

ated in 1912 to convene the First Congress of the Universities of the British Empire. A Universities Bureau of the British Empire<sup>82</sup> was set up in London and served as secretariat, not only to the quinquennial Congresses, but also to the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of the Universities of Great Britain and Ireland, which later emerged from this first manifestation of common university action. Although this committee was another of those phantom British organizations with neither constitution (until 1930) nor formal power to commit the represented institutions, it nevertheless provided an important means of drawing them closer together and was widely used by the government as a medium through which it could consult collectively with the universities on matters of mutual concern.

The impact of the war on the universities was another factor which brought common experiences and tended to promote a common interest. The universities had been "much disintegrated during the war, with undergraduates and staff absent in large numbers, sometimes with buildings requisitioned," and immediately afterward they had to receive "an unprecedented rush of students, including the many thousands who had served in the armed forces."<sup>83</sup> All universities, including even Oxford and Cambridge with their sizable endowments, faced enormous financial problems.

This common need of state financial assistance was to prove the chief catalytic agent in turning the disparate British universities into something remotely resembling a "university system." For when the government created the University Grants Committee in 1919 to administer its aid program, all recipient institutions—in England, Scotland, and Wales—were placed in the same administrative category by the U.G.C., and were asked to consult one another as much as possible in order to coördinate their requests for funds.

The aid program instituted by the University Grants Committee was something different in degree, but not in kind, from the various national grants which had been given to universities and university colleges since 1889. In the next chapter the vital role of the University Grants Committee is surveyed against the historical background outlined above.

<sup>82</sup> In 1948 the name was changed to the Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth.

<sup>83</sup> M. Fry, "The University Grants Committee, an Experiment in Administration," *Universities Quarterly*, 2 (May, 1948), 221-230.

## CHAPTER IV

# THE TRANSITION TO AN OVER-ALL STATE POLICY FOR UNIVERSITIES (1919-1939)

THE CREATION of the University Grants Committee in 1919 was the most important step in the development of an internally consistent national policy for the universities, but this action was preceded by a long and gradual involvement of the state in university finances.

### EARLY PRECEDENTS OF NATIONAL GRANTS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The earliest British national grant to universities dates from the Union of England and Scotland in 1706, when existing Scottish commitments to higher education were taken over by the Exchequer in London and the funds paid from the hereditary revenue of the combined Crown. After 1831 this expenditure was placed on the annual parliamentary Votes, but the amount involved was negligible—in 1832, for instance, being only £5,077.

A unique type of national grant was created for the special circumstances relating to the chartering of the University of London in 1836. The status of this institution as the examining body for students of whatever institutions in Britain and the Empire the government might designate, led the state to make small annual grants for the University's administrative expenses and to offer further provision "in kind" in the form of office accommodations and services.<sup>1</sup>

An incident that occurred in 1841, in connection with the government's financial commitments to the University of London, provided an early indication of the Treasury's tender solicitude for university feelings and of its desire to seek expert advice regarding the unpleasant task of reducing university grants. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, following what he considered was a general agreement in the House of Commons that "a reduction of the [University] Estimate to a considerable extent was possible and necessary," returned the Estimate to the University Senate for reconsideration, saying,

It appears to me... more for the advantage of the Institution that they should voluntarily conform to the wish expressed by the House of Commons, than impose on any department of the Government the disagreeable but necessary duty of acting, in a matter of pecuniary concern, in opposition to their wishes and opinion.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of H. Goulbourn to the Senate of the University of London (November 25, 1841), British Parliamentary Papers (hereafter cited as B.P.P.), 1842, xxxii.

The University Senate, however, respectfully declined to make cuts in what it regarded as a legitimate budget and returned the controversial Estimate unchanged. The Chancellor, who had warned that he would consider it "impossible to act in opposition to the [parliamentary] opinion so generally expressed and approved," then reduced the Estimate himself from £4,170 to £3,370, a 20 per cent cut.

In notifying the University of this reduction, the Chancellor pointed out:

... it would have been far more agreeable to me to have acted in concert with [the University's] governing body, to have supported their attempts to reconcile the interests of the institution with the generally expressed desire of reduced expenditure, and not to be compelled to propose reductions, which they decline to recommend or sanction. In the difficulty in which I am placed I have had recourse to the opinion of eminent men conversant with the subjects of examinations, and animated by the most friendly feeling to the University. I am happy to say that the view which I am disposed to take of the extent of practicable reductions... meets with their concurrence.<sup>3</sup>

Here, one senses, is an early anticipation of the function of a University Grants Committee: advice by experts essentially friendly to the universities, yet cognizant of the practical necessities of government.

However, neither the historically acquired financial obligation to Scottish universities nor the special grant to the University of London was meant to imply governmental readiness to undertake a widespread program of aid to higher education. Nor was there, up to 1850, great pressure for such a program, since Oxford, Cambridge, and Durham Universities all had sizable private endowments. But with the emergence in England and Wales in the latter half of the century of numerous university colleges apparently suffering from chronic insolvency, the state could no longer enjoy in peace a policy of financial aloofness. For example, Owens College, Manchester, in 1852 (the year after its founding), and again in 1872, and Aberystwyth College, Wales, repeatedly during the 1870's, requested national aid, and were told that "it had never been [government] policy to give financial assistance for the promotion of higher education in England."<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, when the Aberdare Committee, appointed in the early 'eighties to investigate Welsh education, recommended national grants as a means of establishing a proper network of secondary and university education in Wales, the government yielded. In 1882 it offered

<sup>3</sup> Letter of H. Goulbourn to the chancellor of the University of London (December 23, 1841), B.P.P., 1842, xxxiii.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Charles Robertson, *The British Universities* (1944), p. 56; see also W. H. G. Armytage, *Civic Universities* (1955), p. 212.

a small £4,000 grant to Aberystwyth College, and similar amounts were later awarded to Cardiff and Bangor Colleges as they were founded, in 1883 and 1884 respectively.<sup>5</sup> These three university colleges—later joined by Swansea—combined in 1893 to become the federal University of Wales.

In the meantime, the English university colleges were faced with acute shortages of funds; money was needed urgently for scientific laboratories, libraries, hostels, and a formidable inventory of other items. Renewed appeals were addressed to the government:

The localities have in almost all cases now practically exhausted the power of raising funds from private sources . . . We cannot afford to wait until public opinion has reached the point at which rate payers generally are convinced that it is to their advantage to support such colleges. The only alternative, therefore, is that the State as a whole shall, through the Government, acknowledge its obligation.<sup>6</sup>

A Royal Commission, appointed in 1885 to investigate the nature of the economic depression through which Britain was then passing, heard dire predictions from many witnesses that, unless the state took forceful action, it would face industrial defeat by Germany and America because of their superior forms of technical education.

In a vein that reminds one of present-day exhortations on Britain's need for better technological training, T. H. Huxley wrote to *The Times* on March 21, 1887: "We are entering, indeed we have already entered, upon the most serious struggle for existence to which this country has ever been committed. The latter years of the century promise to see us in an industrial war of far more serious import than the military wars of its opening years."

A public meeting of representatives of the English university colleges was held in Southampton on May 9, 1887, to try to coördinate the appeals of their colleges. Citing the flood of educated Germans who were allegedly penetrating as far as China, they urged the state to grant £15,000 for distribution to university colleges. The Government agreed, and a Treasury Minute of March 11, 1889, created an *ad hoc* Committee on Grants to University Colleges, composed of five men, including three Members of Parliament, to advise on the allocation of the money. "Though not specifically so called," W. H. G. Armytage has commented, "a University Grants Committee was thus launched."<sup>7</sup>

The advisory committee was instructed to distribute the grant in

<sup>5</sup> Armytage, *op. cit.*, pp. 230-231.

<sup>6</sup> Henry Roseoe, in a letter to *The Times* in 1887, as quoted in Armytage, *op. cit.*, p. 235.

<sup>7</sup> Armytage, *op. cit.*, p. 235.



such a way as "appreciably to strengthen the financial position, especially of the newer and poorer colleges, in the beginning of their struggle for existence, and to stimulate local munificence to renewed and greater efforts."<sup>8</sup>

Eleven university colleges<sup>9</sup> were subsequently approved for grants ranging from £500 to £1,800. The Treasury Minute of July 1, 1889, which accepted this allocation, also spoke with approval of other recommendations of the advisory committee which were to become regular features of the program of national grants to universities: the five-year grant period, designed to reconcile flexibility with continuity; the visitation of recipient institutions by representatives of the government; the publication of some type of annual financial statement by the participating colleges; and finally, the obvious government disclaimer that no institution could claim a vested right to its grant.

The Government which commenced these grants (headed by Lord Salisbury, who in the 1870's had guided the reform legislation on Oxford and Cambridge Universities) was also responsible for three pieces of legislation important to the university colleges: the two Technical Instruction Acts of 1889 and 1891, which gave the newly created county and borough councils the power to levy a rate specifically for technical education; and the Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act of 1890, which provided for large grants from the central government to the local authorities, out of which the latter could help finance technical subjects and applied science.<sup>10</sup>

In addition, the Board of Agriculture, established in 1889, was given £5,000 a year to aid practical or scientific instruction. By the mid-nineties the university colleges at Wye (later associated with the University of London), Leeds, Newcastle, Nottingham, and Reading were each receiving £800 a year in this manner.

By 1904 two more *ad hoc* advisory committees, appointed in 1892 and 1902, had strengthened the precedents established by the first, the number of recipient institutions had risen from eleven to fourteen,<sup>11</sup> and the amount of the common grant had increased from £15,000

<sup>8</sup> Lord President of the Council and Chancellor of the Exchequer, *Aid to University Colleges* (March 1, 1889).

<sup>9</sup> University and King's Colleges, London; Manchester; Birmingham; Sheffield; Leeds; Liverpool; Bristol; Nottingham; Newcastle; and Dundee, Scotland. This last institution was later transferred to the Scottish grant list. The committee believed that the college at Southampton was not yet of sufficient stature to warrant national aid.

<sup>10</sup> H. Higgs, *Financial Report on University Colleges* (December 31, 1901), p. 129.

<sup>11</sup> Bedford College was added in 1896, and Southampton and Reading in 1902.

to £27,000. The committees distributed these sums on the basis of Visitors' reports<sup>12</sup> compiled by academic inspectors, usually heads of Oxford and Cambridge colleges. These early reports discussed many university problems which, significantly enough, have continued to the present, among which were those of professors' pay, superannuation, facilities for research, and libraries.

In the early years of the twentieth century, as the University of London expanded energetically and a steady stream of provincial colleges received their university charters, appeals to the government for greater financial assistance to higher education were made by many public figures. For example, Joseph Chamberlain wrote in 1902: "University competition between states is as potent as competition in building battleships, and it is on that ground that our university conditions become of the highest possible national concern."<sup>13</sup> Sidney Webb, in a Fabian Tract, urged a huge increase in the national grant to university colleges to a healthy £500,000 a year, "to promote National Efficiency."<sup>14</sup>

The government response to this and other agitation was to double the general grant to £54,000 in 1904, to hint at the possibility of a further rise later to £100,000, and to appoint yet another *ad hoc* advisory committee, with R. B. (later Lord) Haldane as chairman.<sup>15</sup> The Haldane Committee's *Third Report*<sup>16</sup> was to be a prophetic document in the development of university-state relations, for it recommended a *continuing* advisory committee which not only would make recommendations concerning the distribution of the grants, but would also carry out the quinquennial visitations in person. The Haldane Committee further urged that, in order to discourage the wasteful spending which resulted from efforts to "use up" a grant before its expiration date, the end-of-the-year balance should not have to be surrendered to the Treasury, but rather should be retained by the proposed advisory committee. Calling attention to the very poor conditions obtaining in most institutions with regard to staff salaries, superannuation arrangements, postgraduate scholarships, and books and equipment, the Haldane Committee proposed that the new advisory committee should have the power to make direct grants to the universities and colleges for these specific purposes.

<sup>12</sup> House of Commons Papers: 1889, 250; 1892, 121; 1894, 204; 1896, 85; 1897, 245; 1902, 252.

<sup>13</sup> Letter to *The Times*, November 6, 1902.

<sup>14</sup> Sidney Webb, Fabian Tract No. 108, also published as *Twentieth Century Politics: A Policy of National Efficiency* (1901).

<sup>15</sup> Treasury Minute of March 30, 1904.

<sup>16</sup> University Colleges Committee, *Third Report* (February 23, 1905).

The Treasury Minute<sup>17</sup> on the Haldane Committee's *Third Report* gives further indication of Whitehall's sensitive regard for university feelings; for, although the Treasury accepted in principle the recommendation of a continuing advisory committee, it noted the "apprehensions of some of the Colleges" that a continuing committee might engage in "undue interference with their internal administration" and promised that it would take great care to give proper instructions to any committee thus created. Furthermore, while agreeing that 10 per cent of the national grant could be earmarked for books and equipment, postgraduate aid, and superannuation assistance, the Treasury rejected the suggestion that the continuing advisory committee be empowered to make earmarked grants for salaries, because it was felt that this budget item formed too important a part of the financial and general policy of the colleges to be controlled by the government. Instead, the Treasury reaffirmed the principle that most of the government grant was to be given in block and its disposal left to the colleges' discretion. The amount of the common grant was, as the government had earlier intimated it might be, raised to £100,000 in 1905.

On January 31, 1906, the Treasury appointed the first continuing Advisory Committee on Grants to University Colleges, "to advise as to the distribution of the Grant in aid of Colleges furnishing education of university standard."<sup>18</sup> One of the original five members (the number was increased to six in 1907) was a man destined for the next quarter of a century to play a central role in the evolution of university-state relations—Sir William McCormick, then secretary of the Carnegie Trust for Scottish Universities. In 1915, he became chairman of the Advisory Council to the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (see below, p. 56); and in 1919, chairman of the University Grants Committee upon its creation. He remained head of both of these important agencies until his death in 1930.

In 1907 the new standing Advisory Committee on Grants (1906–1910) made its first suggestions for allocation of the grant on the proposed ratio of 90 per cent block and 10 per cent earmarked, but by 1908 advanced the opinion (which compares interestingly with a 1952 statement of the University Grants Committee on the same subject) that "it is no longer necessary to continue the system of separate special grants, as the quinquennial reassessment of the grants for general purposes will afford ample opportunity for securing the development

<sup>17</sup> July 18, 1905.

<sup>18</sup> Treasury Minute of this date.

of the Colleges in these directions."<sup>19</sup> The earmarked grants were accordingly dropped, and were not recommenced until 1947.

This first continuing Committee on Grants to University Colleges demonstrated the merit of its more permanent status by bringing sustained attention to bear on the problem of overlapping state aid to universities. It reported:

A study of the problem of how education of university standard may be most advantageously assisted by State grants shows that there is at the present time considerable complexity surrounding this question, not only by reason of overlapping due to various educational bodies carrying on similar work in the same areas, but also by reason of public money derived from rate or tax being voted for higher education by different authorities with insufficient information as to one another's operations.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to the funds available to the universities and colleges from local authorities empowered to subsidize technical education, there were also national funds granted under Votes of the Board of Education, the Board of Agriculture, and the Treasury. By far the most perplexing of these overlaps was that between the grants "for general education of a University standard in Letters and Pure Science" which had been the special care of the Treasury and its various advisory committees, and those for "education of a similar standard concerned with technical and professional subjects (including the training of teachers)" which was under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education. To lessen the duplication of effort, the government decided in 1910 to concentrate the administration of both types of grants under the Board of Education. (The Treasury, however, retained responsibility for aid to Welsh institutions.) The Board of Education then appointed yet another committee—a standing Advisory Committee on University Grants, headed by Sir William McCormick—and in 1911 this committee adopted the practice, recommended earlier, of personally visiting the recipient institutions.<sup>21</sup>

By 1912 the Exchequer grant had risen another £50,000 to £150,000, and the Board of Education funds for universities amounted to approximately the same figure. The special financial relations between the

<sup>19</sup> The Advisory Committee on Grants to University Colleges, *Report* (July 24, 1908), p. 5. This rather clear-cut assurance that the quinquennial review of block grants could accomplish the essential purposes of earmarked grants contrasts markedly with the delicate phrases used in ending earmarked grants in 1952. See below, p. 79.

<sup>20</sup> The Advisory Committee on Grants to University Colleges, *Report* (June 6, 1907), p. 3.

<sup>21</sup> Board of Education, *Report for 1909-10 from those Universities and University Colleges in Great Britain which participate in the parliamentary grant for University Colleges* (June 11, 1911), Cd. 5872, p. viii.

state and the central administrative offices of the University of London had been altered by the London University Act of 1900, and as a consequence the University had joined the regular national grant list in 1901, receiving £8,000 annually. When Durham University (as distinct from its constituent colleges) began accepting £2,000 annually in 1910, all the English universities except Oxford and Cambridge were receiving small annual grants to cover the administrative costs of examinations and of conferring degrees. Meanwhile a small number of capital grants of a few thousand pounds each had been given to universities in Scotland and Wales,<sup>22</sup> and two new English university colleges had been added to the grant list.<sup>23</sup>

The Advisory Committee on University Grants played a large and important part in the creation of a nationwide university pension scheme, the Federated Superannuation Scheme for Universities. Under this arrangement, begun in 1913, the inadequate pension plans at the various universities were merged into one common program, which permitted a faculty member to transfer from one institution to another without loss of his pension rights. It was administered by a completely independent Central Council and operated on a contribution of 5 per cent from the faculty member and 10 per cent from his institution. The scheme was later extended to include governmental and other research organizations to which university faculty members sometimes transferred.<sup>24</sup>

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOVERNMENTAL RESEARCH AGENCIES

After the first decade of this century, growing government interest in the application of scientific knowledge to agriculture, medicine, and industry emerged, foreshadowing a new era for university research programs. In 1909, in response to the problem of increased population and its demands on limited food resources, the government created a Development Commission with extensive funds and powers to aid in the scientific improvement of agriculture and the fisheries. After the completion of a survey of existing facilities for agricultural education and research, a plan was adopted in 1911 with two main objects: to create efficient agricultural research institutes, and to link these with both farmers on the one hand and agricultural schools in the universities on the other. By 1931, when the Agricultural Research Council

<sup>22</sup> Sir Keith Murray, "The Work of the University Grants Committee in Great Britain," *Universiteit en Hogeschool* (Dutch journal), 1 (1955), 250.

<sup>23</sup> London School of Economics and Political Science (1907) and East London College (1910).

<sup>24</sup> *Universities Review*, n.s., Vol. 19, No. 2 (February, 1947), p. 129.

came into existence as a result of this activity (see below, p. 62), more than £270,000 was being spent annually for these two purposes.

In the field of medicine, the National Health Insurance Act of 1911, which made some provision for support of medical research, led in 1913 to the creation of a Medical Research Committee. This body developed into the present Medical Research Council and was given a royal charter in 1920. It operates under the Privy Council, whose Lord President acts as chairman of the Research Council, with the Minister of Health as its vice-chairman. The Medical Research Council receives its funds by grant-in-aid under the Vote for Scientific Investigation in the Civil Estimates.

When war broke out in 1914, Britain found with a shock that it was dangerously dependent on enemy industries for many products essential to its defense, and determined to remedy this defect as quickly as possible. A committee of the Board of Trade was immediately appointed to coördinate the necessary corrective measures, and it submitted a memorandum to the Board of Education in December, 1914, which pointed out the failure of the universities to train the proper types and numbers of students. A secret committee of the Board of Education, under the chairmanship of Sir William McCormick, then prepared a White Paper, published on July 23, 1915, entitled *Scheme for the Organisation and Development of Scientific and Industrial Research*. This scheme envisaged the creation of a new governmental unit, the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (often referred to hereafter as the D.S.I.R.), which would have its own separate Vote in the Estimates and would be aided by an advisory council composed of the most eminent scientists and academicians in the country. It would operate under the Privy Council, with the Lord President once again serving as chairman.

The D.S.I.R.'s three major tasks became to finance worthy research proposals, to award research fellowships and studentships, and to encourage the development of research associations in private industry and research facilities in university science departments. With Sir William McCormick, chairman of the Committee on University Grants, also appointed to serve as chairman of the D.S.I.R. Advisory Council, and with assessors from the medical and agricultural research bodies invited to attend meetings of the D.S.I.R., this Department rapidly assumed a key role in coördinating government aid to university research.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> H. F. Heath and A. L. Heatherington, *Industrial Research and Development in the United Kingdom* (1946), pp. 250-251.

Before World War II these various research bodies did not have a great deal of money with which to finance university research. What sums they did distribute were allocated in the following way: the interested government agency, having kept itself generally informed about which university departments might be engaged in work related to its own, would approach the department and either negotiate a contract for qualified university personnel to undertake the work, or else obtain an agreement whereby one or more government scientists might come in and work alongside the university personnel. If new research facilities were needed, these would often be provided at state expense.

#### THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMITTEE

The heavy impact of World War I on the universities has been described earlier. As a result of this impact, the university communities found after the war that inflation had lessened the value of salaries and of many endowments, and had raised the costs of operation; student enrollment dropped markedly during the war, and with it university income from student fees; many of the university buildings, especially those put to strenuous war use, needed extensive repair and maintenance work; the fields of knowledge in general, and that of science in particular, had greatly expanded under the impetus of war-time activity; and, finally, in addition to all their other problems, universities were faced with an unprecedented number of applicants for admission, following the general demobilization of the armed forces.<sup>26</sup>

Therefore, by 1918, when the President of the Board of Education called for a meeting on enlarged postwar grants to universities, to be attended by the heads of the interested institutions, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and himself, he found not only the Scottish, Welsh, and modern English universities but also Oxford and Cambridge anxious to attend and advance their claims for national aid. At this meeting, according to one of the participants who described it later, the university heads indicated their need for a greatly increased grant, but insisted that they were unwilling to accept ordinary governmental controls as a condition of its appropriation: "No one but ourselves can have any idea of how that money can best be spent from time to time. The doors are open, and if we make fools of ourselves, you can take it away. Inspect freely, but there must be absolutely no control."<sup>27</sup>

The government evidently agreed with this position, for when the

<sup>26</sup> Enrollments in 1919-20, 33,000, were more than 50 per cent above the 1913-14 figures, 21,000.

<sup>27</sup> Sir Alfred Hopkinson, in "The State and the University," in Third Congress of the Universities of the British Empire, *Report of the Proceedings* (1926), pp. 27-30.

University Grants Committee was created in 1919, with the terms of reference, "to enquire into the financial needs of University education in the United Kingdom and to advise the Government as to the application of any grants that may be made by Parliament to meet them,"<sup>28</sup> it was placed, not under the Board of Education, but under the Treasury. This placement, Sir Keith Murray wrote in 1955, after he became chairman of the University Grants Committee, was

... deliberate and one which has been the source of much confidence which the Universities have placed in the Committee, [for] they have no fears that a Minister, or his officials, who is likely to have theories or special interest in educational matters, may question the objective advice of the Committee and exert an undue influence on university affairs.<sup>29</sup>

The original University Grants Committee (hereafter often called the U.G.C.) consisted of a part-time chairman, Sir William McCormick, and ten distinguished academicians not in the active service of any of the institutions which might be claimants for grants. Members of the U.G.C. were appointed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer after consultation with the President of the Board of Education and the Secretary of State for Scotland. The committee was served by a full-time secretary drawn from the Treasury and some clerical assistants. An observer later remarked on the symbolic significance of the administrative pattern: "An academic Chairman, and a civil servant (usually of the Treasury) as Secretary; the one as it were facing to the Universities, the other to the Treasury."<sup>30</sup>

The establishment of the University Grants Committee in 1919 represented improved governmental coördination of two types: both functional and geographic. The subheads and Votes in the Estimates under which national grants to universities had previously been made available varied according to the type of activity aided and the location of the university. Under the U.G.C. system Parliament was asked to vote an annual block sum to the Treasury, under Class IV, Vote 11, "Universities and Colleges, etc., Great Britain," and this figure was intended to include most of the earlier types of Votes for all the universities in England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland.<sup>31</sup> Oxford and Cambridge Uni-

<sup>28</sup> Treasury Minute of July 14, 1919.

<sup>29</sup> Sir Keith Murray, *op. cit.*, p. 251. Incidentally, H. A. L. Fisher, President of the Board of Education in 1919, is credited by his biographer with playing a major role in making the decision to place the U.G.C. under the Treasury. David Ogg, *Herbert Fisher* (1947), p. 114.

<sup>30</sup> Sir Hector Hetherington, Principal of Glasgow University, *The British University System, 1914-1954*, Aberdeen University Studies, No. 113 (1954), p. 6.

<sup>31</sup> Select Committee on Estimates 1951-52, *Fifth Report*, H.C. 163, Annex 5, pp. 62-63. In answer to a question in Parliament on April 11, 1922, it was announced that the U.G.C. had taken over the following grants: Technical Instruction from



versities did not join the U.G.C. grant list until the Royal Commission in 1922 sanctioned their eligibility to receive continuing national aid; they did, however, receive interim grants of £30,000 annually during the period 1919-1923. Responsibility for national grants to the Irish universities, both north and south, was transferred in 1922 to the respective governments in Northern Ireland and the Irish Free State, leaving the U.G.C. with jurisdiction solely in Great Britain.

In 1919 the sum voted by Parliament for the universities rose to £1,000,000, of which approximately two-thirds was allocated to recurrent grants for general expenditures and one-third to nonrecurrent grants for capital expansion, purchase and repair of equipment, and similar expenses. Although the Grants Committee continued the practice of its predecessors of personally visiting the recipient institutions at least once every five years, the grants were not provided on a quinquennial basis until 1925, when the postwar financial situation had eased somewhat.

It had been during the period of austerity that the famous "Geddes' Axe" of 1922 in a nationwide economy wave brought about, amid some heated protests,<sup>32</sup> the only instance in the history of British state aid to universities of a reduction in grant from that of a previous year.<sup>33</sup> The U.G.C., commenting three years later on this reduction from £1,500,000 to £1,200,000, noted that it "came at a most awkward time, when the springs of increased local support were also beginning to dry up." The Grants Committee therefore urged that "notwithstanding the still serious condition of the Exchequer, a substantial increase in the Parliamentary Grant . . . be no longer delayed," and cited in justification the fact that "a wise expenditure upon university education is a highly profitable national investment."<sup>34</sup> Subsequently, in 1926, the grant was restored to its previous figure.

The U.G.C.'s formal terms of reference (see p. 58) were deliberately left general at the committee's inception in order to allow flexibility,

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the Board of Education; Aeronautics and Technical Optics from the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research; Oriental Studies from the Treasury; and Oceanography from the Development Commission. *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, 5th ser., Vol. 153 (1922), cols. 253-254.

<sup>32</sup> For example, the General Council of the Trade Union Congress and the National Executive of the Labour Party passed a resolution on December 15, 1921, decriing the proposed reduction, "which can do virtually nothing to relieve the national finances, but which will be a serious blow to higher education." *University Bulletin*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (January, 1922), p. 11. Protests of the Association of University Teachers are carried in the same issue. For other protests, see *Nature*, Vol. 108, No. 2716 (1921), p. 38.

<sup>33</sup> For a table showing the Treasury grants to universities in selected years between 1919 and 1957, see Appendix III.

<sup>34</sup> U.G.C., *Report* (1925), p. 6.

but more definition was forthcoming in a letter of July 16, 1920, from Austen Chamberlain, Chancellor of the Exchequer, to Sir William McCormick. In this, Chamberlain said that the Grants Committee, when supplementing local support for a university with government money, "must approve the purposes for which it is applied," and should keep in mind the following guides:

It would clearly be improper for the Government to subsidise activities on the part of the Universities which may be unwarranted in the national interest or im-provident on the part of a particular institution . . .

Further, the Treasury grant . . . must be regarded as applicable only to such activities as are clearly of University character . . .

. . . there are certain branches of University study . . . which, while of national importance, make no special appeal to the support of any one locality . . . I rely on your Committee to recommend such allocation of the funds at their disposal as is likely to serve in the fullest measure the interests of University education as a whole.<sup>36</sup>

The Grants Committee, thus instructed, felt justified in taking a broad yet restrained approach to the coördination of university policy. In its early reports the U.G.C. examined nearly all facets of university life and offered suggestions for many improvements,<sup>37</sup> but went no further in pursuing actual national coördination of university policies than to praise the practice of voluntary interuniversity consultations, such as had taken place in 1921 on the question of the raising of fees.

The U.G.C. did, however, urge each university to address itself to "the formulation of a definite policy, in the light of which the many problems of its future development over a period of years can be considered and decided, in due relation to its financial position and prospects."<sup>37</sup> The Grants Committee suggested that, in forming such a policy, each university might consider the following sequence of priorities:

1) Extinguish existing debts.

2) Put existing departments in good order with respect to staff, salaries, equipment, and library facilities.

<sup>36</sup> U.G.C., *Report* (1921), Cmd. 1163, Appendix, p. 19.

<sup>37</sup> For example, in its 1921 *Report*, the U.G.C. surveyed the following topics: faculty salaries; superannuation; tenure and administrative responsibilities; administrative staff; equipment and accommodation, especially libraries; student life and halls of residence; the academic status of teaching in history, economics, social science, modern languages, fine arts, medicine, commerce, engineering, and technology. The major suggestions offered referred to: improvement of salary and pensions; more voice in academic government for junior staff and women staff members; strengthening of the library and of the status of the librarian; and better provision for administrative staff for the vice-chancellor.

<sup>37</sup> U.G.C., *Report* (1925), p. 28.

3) Meet the social needs of the students as to hostels, common rooms, refectories, and so forth.

4) Before establishing a new department, consider "how far such a course is justifiable in relation to the general needs of the nation and the interests of university education as a whole."<sup>38</sup>

It should be noted that even such mild "suggestions" as these were always carefully formulated by the U.G.C., for it was of the utmost importance to the committee that the universities not be given any grounds upon which to complain of undue governmental interference. As an illustration of this attitude, the committee's report in 1925 insisted that

... to different universities the same general problems will present themselves in different orders of urgency, determined by their peculiar histories and circumstances; and we must say at once that, even if we thought we could propound, as we are sure we cannot, an ideal common policy for all universities, we should not feel the slightest wish to press its adoption.<sup>39</sup>

Therefore, although occasional criticisms were expressed by university personnel concerning either the general principle of accepting money from the state<sup>40</sup> or certain specific aspects of U.G.C. recommendations,<sup>41</sup> the over-all picture of university-state relations could still be described at the 1926 Congress of the Universities of the British Empire in the following idyllic, if not completely accurate terms:

I am told that the Universities of the British Isles are still completely autonomous. After Royal Commissions, Departmental Committees, Boards of Education, representation of Public Authorities on their governing Boards, State and Municipal subsidies, a Labour Government, and Sir William McCormick's Committee, they are none the less absolutely self-controlled; they move only from within. Their funds, however now obtained, are, like their ancient private wealth, administered at their own unfettered discretion; their largely increased public services which make them more felt than ever in the life of the State, are left, in character and extent,

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>40</sup> For example, Sir William Ridgeway of Cambridge wrote that "the acceptance of a Government Grant is fraught with the gravest danger. Unless it is made a permanent charge on the Consolidated Fund it will prove fatal to the autonomy of the University." From his article, "The Royal Commission and the Universities," *Quarterly Review*, 238 (1922), 347-360. P. 347.

<sup>41</sup> The editor of the *University Bulletin*, for example, raised strong objections to the U.G.C. comment on salary and superannuation proposals of the Association of University Teachers: "We should not object much to this indirect condemnation of a vital principle of the A.U.T. movement if we knew exactly the position of the U.G.C. and . . . their relationship to the universities. On the one hand, they disclaim all intention of destroying the complete autonomy of university institutions and then proceed to condemn, without offering detailed criticism, a document which has won almost universal support among university teachers and governing bodies." *University Bulletin*, 1 (1922), 10.

wholly to their long-trained sense of public duty. Elementary education is a function of the State; secondary education is becoming more and more so; technical education, apart from the Universities, is likely to get increased State support and control; associations of teachers are demanding that "public opinion" shall "accept education as needing a continuous and steadily increasing provision and as a national service . . ." But among the victories of British common sense, there still remains the British Government policy to support the Universities, and to leave them free as they were in the days before the State controlled any education.<sup>42</sup>

At this same Congress, however, the Earl of Balfour, Chancellor of Cambridge, took a less cheerful line by pointing out the probability that the universities would, especially after having accepted state aid, become subject to increasing pressures to favor "applied" at the expense of "pure" sciences. He insisted that the latter constituted the true mission of the university and added that much of the desired information of practical value resulted incidentally from the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake.<sup>43</sup>

#### THE 1930'S: ADMINISTRATIVE CONFUSION AND PHILOSOPHICAL DISAGREEMENT

The government continued to use several channels other than the U.G.C. to aid university research programs in the fields of agriculture, medicine, science, and industry. Indeed, the work of the various bodies connected with agricultural research had become so extensive that the Agricultural Research Council was established by royal charter in 1931 to plan and coördinate research throughout the whole field. Once again, as in the founding of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research and the Medical Research Council, the new body was made responsible to the Privy Council, whose Lord President served as chairman. Attempts were made to coördinate the work of these three and other agencies associated with research programs by having assessors from all of them attend the meetings of the Advisory Council of the D.S.I.R.

Such efforts at integration were not completely successful, however, for in 1932 the Select Committee on Estimates (see p. 117) drew attention to the danger that having so many agencies acting in the distribution of state funds would confuse Parliament in its attempt to determine exactly how much money it was approving, for which kinds of activities, and for which institutions. The Select Committee recommended, there-

<sup>42</sup> E. R. Holme, in "The State and the University," in *Third Congress of the Universities of the British Empire, Report of the Proceedings* (1926), p. 14.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4-7.

fore, that the U.G.C. should add a schedule to its annual Estimate showing the approximate total grant provided on other Votes for each of the institutions it assisted.<sup>44</sup>

The somewhat confusing variety of state agencies aiding the universities in 1930 provoked a criticism of a different type from Abraham Flexner, the American author of *Universities, American, English, German*:

The creation of the University Grants Committee, the Medical Research Council, the Department of Industrial and Scientific Research indicates recognition of the fact that England lacks modern universities. The organizations just named give temporary relief—a block grant, support for a promising investigator or an important investigation. Such agencies are not superfluous; under all circumstances they have their uses; but they are no substitute for . . . developed [modern] universities.<sup>45</sup>

In this judgment, however, Flexner overlooked entirely the capacity of these government bodies to evolve into effective instruments for aiding in the attainment of “developed universities.” More fundamentally, he failed to appreciate the fact that in Britain this evolutionary process is usually vital to the successful functioning of an institution.

Notwithstanding these shortcomings, Flexner’s criticism of the essentially *ad hoc* nature of these agencies in 1930 was in the main correct. Other foreigners could praise “la coordination spontanée dans les universités anglaises,”<sup>46</sup> but certainly most of the British writers on education who produced the voluminous literature of critical self-examination during and after the late 1920’s<sup>47</sup> agreed that the nationwide character of the problems then confronting the universities required more long-range thinking and planning. The most important of these problems concerned: (1) the impact of increasing numbers of students both on university standards and on graduate employment,

<sup>44</sup> Select Committee on Estimates 1931–32, *First Report*, H.C. 55, p. 5.

<sup>45</sup> Abraham Flexner, *Universities, American, English, German* (1930), p. 298.

<sup>46</sup> This was the title of an article by F. Bouillot which was reviewed in the *Universities Review* for April, 1929. (Strangely enough, the reviewer neglected to mention where the article in question was published!) Mr. Bouillot was said to show “a sympathetic and broadminded tolerance of the English method, or rather lack of method, that achieves some sort of coordination among the universities without centralisation. The writer points out what we miss: the defined common aim, the economy of money, of effort, and the unity which go with centralisation, but he appreciates the benefits of our freedom, not the least being the power of each university to cater for special needs of its own district.” Rose Hamilton, review, in *Universities Review*, n.s., Vol. 1, No. 2 (April, 1929), p. 143.

<sup>47</sup> See, for example, H. G. G. Herklots, *The New Universities, An External Examination* (1928); A. N. Whitehead, *The Aims of Education* (1929); T. Greenidge, *Degenerate Oxford, a Critical Study of Modern University Life* (1930); M. A. Pink, *If the Blind Lead* (1932); Bertrand Russell, *Education and the Social Order* (1932); Sir Ernest Barker, *National Character and the Factors in Its Formation* (1927); Robertson, *op. cit.* (in n. 4, above); Lord Eustace Percy, *Education at*

(2) the compartmentalization of knowledge and the mutual relations of the arts and the sciences; and (3) the place of applied technical subjects and of technical colleges in the system of higher education.

With the coming of the depression and the dearth of employment possibilities for students directly out of secondary school, the rate of enrollment increase in British universities was accelerated from a mere 3 per cent increase during the years 1923-24 through 1928-29 to an 11 per cent increase during the years 1929-30 through 1933-34. This, coupled with the general economic stagnation, brought a rise in unemployment of university graduates and caused Sir Ernest Barker to decri the lack of national planning on the question of the kinds and numbers of university-trained persons needed in the country. Sir Ernest warned: "The discontented product of a clerkly system of education may become a revolutionary force."<sup>16</sup>

Sir Charles Grant Robertson, Vice-Chancellor of Birmingham University, feared that the increased enrollments would foster a type of "highly competent mediocrity" that would be a "real danger to a nation, and above all, to a university."<sup>17</sup>

W. H. G. Armytage, in his admirable chapter on British higher education in the 1930's,<sup>18</sup> pointed out that a large number and variety of individuals and organizations were expressing emphatic opinions on the perennial questions of proper curricula and of the synthesis of highly specialized disciplines. Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), a satire on science's excessive self-confidence, and the Bishop of Ripon's suggestion to the British Association in 1927 that science take a ten-year holiday were examples of the continuing mutual recriminations between the arts and the sciences over their respective places in the curriculum.

The brunt of the humanists' abuse, however, was not directed at the "pure" sciences, which, though considered too imperious in their pretensions, were nevertheless granted to be legitimate university disciplines; the humanists' real contempt was reserved for the frankly utilitarian subjects that were intruding more and more into university curricula. Flexner lists example after example of applied technical studies which had by that time been allowed to establish a foothold in modern British universities. Such "exercises" (Flexner's term) as courses in brewing, gas engineering, glass technology, librarianship, and automobile engineering were, the humanists believed, far better relegated to technical colleges.

<sup>16</sup> Barker, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

<sup>17</sup> Robertson, *op. cit.* (in n. 4, above), p. 75.

<sup>18</sup> Armytage, *op. cit.* (in n. 4, above), chapter xii.

From the opposing camp, Lord Eustace Percy, who, as President of the Board of Education, was charged with the supervision of the technical college system, responded with the warning that the humanists' condescension boded ill for a country which was "no longer . . . to be enjoyed and exploited for its advantages, [but rather] . . . to be saved."<sup>51</sup> Alleging that the technical colleges had been "thrust, as it were, into a corner of our national system and treated as, at best, mere useful adjuncts of the workshop and the mine," Lord Percy spurred the controversy, which continues to the present time, on the proper relationship of the technical colleges to the rest of higher education. In the meantime, the Association of Teachers in Technical Instruction gave practical expression to Lord Percy's admonishments by undertaking during the 1930's a campaign to "obtain recognition of [technical] colleges as legitimate partners with the universities at the head of the educational system."<sup>52</sup>

The University Grants Committee was naturally not indifferent to all this discussion and dissension about university affairs, but, while feeling free to express opinions on most of the issues in dispute, it continued to be very careful in doing so, lest its suggestions be regarded as mandates to the universities. The closest that the U.G.C. came to expressing outright displeasure at the universities' lack of response to its recommendations was in its report in 1930. After noting the Treasury's criticisms that the committee's requests for increased grants were time after time made for the ostensible purpose of helping to pay salaries and aiding libraries while, in actual fact, the universities were using the grants for curricular expansion, the U.G.C. reemphasized its advice that a university should not branch out into new activities until after consolidating its position on salaries and libraries. This mild rebuke concluded with the warning: "We shall be profoundly disappointed if, at the end of another quinquennium, we have once more to inform [the Treasury] that it is for expenditure upon these two items that additional income is in general most urgently required."<sup>53</sup>

On the issue of the place of applied subjects in university curricula, the U.G.C. sided with the academic "purists": "If industry comes to look to the Universities for technicians and administrators, in the same way as the Local [Government] Authorities look to them for school teachers, their academic ideals are surely robust enough to resist un-

<sup>51</sup> Percy, *op. cit.*, p. 57. Lord Percy also commented that "the most desperate need of English education is a common university policy" (p. 50).

<sup>52</sup> Armytage, *op. cit.*, p. 270.

<sup>53</sup> U.G.C., *Report* (1930), p. 51.

due influence from either . . ." Rather than become the "tied house" of any "special interest or calling," the Grants Committee continued, a university could render the best service to the nation by remaining "true to itself." Then, in a key passage, the committee concluded:

The Universities cannot indeed isolate themselves from the practical affairs of life, in which it is one of their duties to fit their students to take a useful and enlightened part, but the principle for which they primarily stand is the disinterested pursuit of knowledge in all its branches, with freedom for the spirit of enquiry to follow whatever path its work may disclose.<sup>4</sup>

Regarding the question of the ideal curriculum, the U.G.C. recognized that "the objective of the best training for a vocation in life is not easily reconciled with the objective of the best training for life itself. . . . Universities . . . have always been faced with this dilemma."<sup>5</sup> However, in order to encourage as much as possible the proper conditions for liberal education, the U.G.C. urged the development of tutorial systems and halls of residence, and warned against overspecialization.

The Grants Committee also made a survey of the universities to determine the extent of unemployment among recent graduates, and was able to report in 1935 that the danger which had threatened in the early part of that decade had receded markedly. The U.G.C. nevertheless recommended the expansion of university Appointments Boards (i.e., job-placement bureaus) and stated its regret that local government officials had not cultivated more widely the practice of recruiting their personnel from university graduates.

In 1930 Sir William McCormick died and was succeeded as chairman of the Grants Committee by Sir Walter Buchanan Riddell (the first secretary of the U.G.C. in 1919), who died soon afterward, in 1934. Sir Walter Moberly then succeeded to the chairmanship, which position was made a full-time one in 1936, in recognition of the increasing burden of U.G.C. responsibilities.

As for the level of national grants, after reaching £1,550,000 annually for the quinquennium of 1925-26 through 1929-30, they climbed further to £1,800,000 a year throughout the subsequent five-year period and remained there despite the economic pressures of the depression. In 1936, after receiving a deputation from the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, and in line with a recommendation of the U.G.C., the Chancellor of the Exchequer agreed to raise the grants by an additional £300,000, up a total of £2,100,000 annually.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 52-53. One wonders whether the present U.G.C. would deal quite so harshly with courses in technology, business, and teacher training.

<sup>5</sup> As quoted in Armytage, *op. cit.*, p. 274.



The 1930's should not be passed over without some mention of the issue of academic freedom. The influx into England of many scholars expelled from Nazi Germany in 1934 and 1935 and the controversy aroused in Parliament and the press by Professor Laski's lectures in Moscow in 1934<sup>56</sup> combined to bring the issue formally before the Association of University Teachers (the A.U.T.). At its meeting in December, 1934, the A.U.T. Council adopted the following resolution:

The Association of University Teachers affirms the right of University teachers to the full exercise of their functions and privileges as citizens. It maintains that the public expression of opinion, within the limits of the law, on controversial matters is in no way incompatible with the position and responsibilities of a university teacher, it being understood that such expression of opinion is personal and does not commit the Institution to which he belongs.

The A.U.T. recognizes that a special responsibility rests on a University teacher to weigh his words carefully when making public pronouncements. But the application of this principle in particular cases must, in the final resort, be left to the judgement of the individual concerned, and the A.U.T. would resist any attempt by University authorities or by outside bodies to impose restrictions on such expression of opinion.<sup>57</sup>

When certain university elements, not satisfied that this resolution sufficed to meet the danger of possible repressions, formed an Academic Freedom Committee and pressed their claims more vigorously, the editor of the *Universities Review* replied, "There is little justification for all this pother. Our academic freedom has not been, nor is it likely to be, threatened by anyone." He dismissed the idea of governmental restrictions with the opinion that the Grants Committee is "not only trusted implicitly by university teachers but is coming to be regarded as the champion of our peculiar rights."<sup>58</sup>

The U.G.C., whose functioning at that time was described by the head of a university college as a "miracle of self-effacement,"<sup>59</sup> advanced this assurance in 1936 regarding academic freedom: "No doubt in a country like our own, where doctrines of sovereignty have seldom been pushed to extremes and where the zeal for centralisation or bureaucratic regimentation either has never been strong or has been kept within bounds, the risks to University autonomy are relatively small."<sup>60</sup>

As the prospect of war grew in the late 1930's, attention in the universities and the U.G.C. was necessarily diverted to the grim task of preparing for that eventuality. The U.G.C. became, in the words of Sir

<sup>56</sup> Kingsley Martin, *Harold Laski* (1953), pp. 94-95.

<sup>57</sup> *Universities Review*, n.s., Vol. 6, No. 2 (April, 1935), p. 13.

<sup>58</sup> *Universities Review*, n.s., Vol. 7, No. 1 (October, 1935), pp. 1-3.

<sup>59</sup> John Murray, "Freedom in Universities," *Universities Review*, n.s., Vol. 7, No. 1 (October, 1935), p. 21.

<sup>60</sup> U.G.C., *Report* (1936), p. 10.

Keith Murray, "a clearing house for all the plans for the use of the Universities in the event of war."<sup>1</sup>

The Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals also assumed a greater importance in this period—almost in spite of itself. Originally, it may be remembered, the Vice-Chancellors' Committee functioned merely as part of the Executive Council of the Universities Bureau of the British Empire and met only in "rump session" after imperial business had been transacted. Only in 1931, after the Universities Bureau had been reorganized, did there emerge a constitution for a formal, separate committee of senior university officers in Britain. The Courts and Councils of the various relevant universities were asked to consider the draft constitution and, if they approved (as they all did), to appoint their representatives to the new Vice-Chancellors' Committee.

The only "new" aspect of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, however, was its formal status, for it continued to act only as a consultative body, with no power to commit its member institutions. If it desired any action to be taken by the universities, it had to seek specific authorization from the appropriate governing bodies. According to its senior member, writing in 1954:

That and no other is the position which the Committee occupies and desires to occupy . . . But from 1939 onwards, whether it liked it or not, on some matters the Committee has had to act. . . . With war impending, the Government sought the advice of the Committee on many issues affecting the Universities which were then invested with a high degree of secrecy . . . There was no answer to the Government view that they must have some organisation able to speak for the Universities as a whole, and able to keep silence when silence was called for.<sup>2</sup>

Certainly the lengthening lists of topics discussed at the Vice-Chancellors' Committee meetings just before the war<sup>3</sup> and the greatly increased number of these gatherings in contrast with the rather casual four a year originally held, were indications that this committee, with or without imposing formal powers, was destined to parallel the U.G.C. in growth of influence and responsibility. With the Grants Committee and Vice-Chancellors' Committee thus drawn closer together and both given heavy responsibilities for coördinating the work of the universities during the war, the scene was set for the dramatic transition to positive state leadership in higher education after 1945.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Keith Murray, *op. cit.* (in n. 22, above), p. 252.

<sup>2</sup> Hetherington, *op. cit.* (in n. 30, above), pp. 8-9.

<sup>3</sup> Lists of these topics are provided in the annual *Report of the Executive Council* published by the Association of the Universities of the British Commonwealth. For a typical recent list, see Appendix V.

## THE EMERGENCE OF POSITIVE STATE LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION

AS PREVIOUS chapters have shown, university development has always been more or less closely connected with the flow of national events, but this was never more true than for the period following World War II, when the scope and purpose of the universities became one of the most vital concerns of an exhausted state faced with a variety of formidable problems. One observer noted: "More nearly a debtor nation now, with resources gravely depleted, Britain is attempting at the same time both to restore and re-equip her economy and to proceed from political on to social democracy. . . . It is assumed that she will be able to do all this with no loss of freedom."

It will be the goal of this and the following chapter to describe the various ways in which expanded state activity and planning since 1945 have affected the evolution of the relations between universities and the state. In order to bring coherence to the mass of postwar data, it has been necessary to depart somewhat from the general chronological pattern hitherto employed. The present chapter, therefore, concentrates on the emerging roles of the University Grants Committee and its unofficial counterpart in university circles, the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals. The next chapter deals with other state activities affecting the universities, including in particular the burgeoning problem of technical education.

### NATIONAL PLANNING AND UNIVERSITY-STATE RELATIONS

World War II, like its predecessor, had a drastic impact on both the nation in general and the universities in particular.<sup>2</sup> The latter fared better in one respect and worse in another during the second holocaust. On the one hand, probably owing to the existence of, and coöperation between, the University Grants Committee and the Vice-Chancellors' Committee, there was a more discriminating use of university manpower during the war, and consequently a smaller drop in university enrollments: because of the widespread practice of deferring students of science and medicine, university numbers fell only from 50,000 to about 36,000. On the other hand, university buildings suffered greater

<sup>1</sup> Sir Fred Clarke, as quoted in George Kneller, *Higher Learning in Britain* (1955), p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> For a detailed description of the universities in wartime, see the *Times Educational Supplement*, February 15 and 22 and March 1, 1941, *passim*.

war damage, and the evacuation of several universities from their exposed locations caused a plethora of unprecedented complications. The University of London, in particular, was widely dispersed, some of its constituent colleges being moved as far as Aberdeen, St. Andrews, Swansea, and Exeter.

Also, the universities faced the familiar wartime evils of spiraling inflation and a heavy backlog of plant maintenance and repair needs, and of postponed construction. It became obvious that university expenditures would have to increase sharply, particularly when the ex-servicemen began to return to the classroom. And since the high wartime rate of taxation continued for the most part unchanged after 1945, it also became obvious that the state, and not private benefactors,<sup>3</sup> would have to bear the brunt of these increased expenditures.

Again owing to the coöperation and joint planning of the U.G.C. and the Vice-Chancellors' Committee, the former was able to present to the Treasury in January, 1945, a convincing memorandum outlining tentative university plans for the next ten years and pointing out that "the universities had reached a critical point in their history and that the expansion and improvement of facilities for university education which the public interest demanded could be achieved only with the aid of largely increased subventions from the Exchequer."

Sir John Anderson, Churchill's Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1945, accepted the U.G.C. recommendation with the agreement that, pending more settled conditions and the reports of several committees of enquiry appointed by government departments to investigate the national need for certain types of professional specialists, the national grant be raised for a period of two years from £2,149,000 to £4,149,000 annually, and that a further £1,000,000 a year be included to meet the costs of the improvements in medical education recommended by the Goodenough Committee of 1944 (see n. 10, below). Furthermore, an assurance was given in general terms that the grant would be substantially increased in the course of the remaining years of the decade.

Several developments in the mid-1940's pointed to a greatly enlarged university system. For instance, the forces for expansion received endorsement in 1943-44 from four different studies of the general university situation in Britain. These were published by the Association of Scientific Workers, the Association of University Teachers, the British Association (through its special committee studying the universities),

<sup>3</sup> University income from endowments, donations, and subscriptions declined from 18 per cent of university income in 1938-39 to 11.5 per cent in 1946-47 and 4.7 per cent in 1955-56. See Appendix IV.

<sup>4</sup> As quoted in U.G.C., *University Development from 1935 to 1947* (1948), p. 76. Cited hereafter in this chapter as U.G.C., *Univ. Devel. 1935-1947*.

and the National Union of Students, respectively.' In addition, Sir Ernest (later Lord) Simon, chairman of the Council at Manchester University, published a pamphlet in 1944, *The Development of British Universities*, which called for "considerable expansion" of the universities and labeled previous provision for English universities as "parsimonious" compared to that in the United States.

From the government's side, a trend toward a planned society was becoming manifest, and implicit in this was a growing demand for an enlarged university system. Accelerated by the wartime need to utilize all human and physical resources to their utmost potential, greater state planning came to be accepted in principle by all political parties as a necessary concomitant of a revitalized and expanding postwar economy. As early as 1943 a political scientist was offering this prophecy: "The two world wars . . . bring us, whatever we wish, to the certainty of a planned society."<sup>6</sup> Repercussions of this on the universities gradually became evident as various studies undertaken and plans adopted by the government combined to betoken a major expansion in higher education. Among such plans and studies were those made by the several committees of enquiry on university training in various professional fields (see p. 72), those leading to the Beveridge Committee *Report* on social welfare measures, and those laying the groundwork for the Education Act of 1944 and the National Health Act.

The Education Act of 1944 was particularly significant for the universities in at least three main ways: Educationally, it promised to increase greatly the number of students qualified for university matriculation. Administratively, by completing the long transition from the laissez-faire beginnings of state involvement in education in 1833 to a national system of education, it lent support to those who were urging increased state coördination of developments in higher education. And politically, by means of its proposed "alternate ladder" to scientific status, involving "parity of esteem" for those who ascended via new secondary modern or technical schools and then technical colleges, it added to the controversy over "social equality" and the universities.<sup>7</sup>

The Education Act, which cannot be described here in detail, raised the school-leaving age from fourteen to fifteen years, and promised a further rise, as soon as conditions permitted, to the age of sixteen. Furthermore, free part-time education was to be provided until the age of eighteen. The Local Education Authorities (i.e., the Education

<sup>6</sup> W. H. G. Armytage, *Civic Universities* (1955), pp. 281-282.

<sup>7</sup> H. J. Laski, *Reflections on the Revolution of our Time* (1943), p. 163.

<sup>8</sup> The question of "parity of esteem" is considered further below, p. 178.

Committees of the various units of local government) were given the responsibility of making sure that a full range of primary, secondary, and further education was available in their areas. In particular, the secondary schools had to be

... sufficient in number, character, and equipment to afford for all pupils opportunities of education offering such variety of instruction and training as may be desirable, in view of their different ages, abilities, and aptitudes, and of the different periods for which they may be expected to remain at school.<sup>6</sup>

To meet this Herculean task, the Local Education Authorities provided, broadly speaking, three different types of secondary schools: the grammar school, preparing boys and girls for the universities and the professions; the "modern school," offering a good all-round education, with perhaps some technical or vocational bias, to students who failed to gain entry to the first type; and the technical school (now increasingly included in one or the other of the previous two categories), which trains students who have strong technical aptitudes. Local Education Authorities have the discretionary power to combine any two or all three types into one school, if they wish. If the types merely exist side by side in the same set of buildings, the school is called "bilateral" or "multilateral"; if they are fused, the school is termed "comprehensive." The "comprehensive school" is also involved in the political controversy about "social equality" and will be mentioned again later, in connection with the charge of class advantages in university and secondary education.

Although the Ministry of Education does not directly provide, maintain, or control any schools or employ any teachers, it nevertheless has some powers of inspection and of the purse (e.g., it provides three-fifths of the total sum spent by the Local Education Authorities) which give it ample means of influencing educational policies and practices.

The extent of the state's accelerated interest in the universities during the 1940's was, as mentioned earlier, further indicated by the number of committees of enquiry appointed during and after the war by government departments. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture for Scotland appointed four different committees (two of them headed by Dr. Loveday, one by Lord Alness, and one by Lord Justice Luxmoore) which reported between 1943 and 1946 on ways of improving teaching and research in agricultural and veterinary education.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> British Information Services, *Education in Great Britain* (1952), pp. 11-16.

<sup>7</sup> Committee on Post-war Agricultural Education in England and Wales, *Report* (1943), Cmd. 6433; Committee on Veterinary Education in Great Britain, *Second*

Medical and dental education were the subjects of extensive reports in 1944 and 1946 by the Goodenough and Teviot Committees, both appointed by the Ministry of Health in conjunction with the Department of Health for Scotland.<sup>10</sup> In 1946 the Clapham Committee, appointed by the Privy Council and the Treasury, reported on social and economic research; and the Barlow Committee, appointed by the Lord President of the Council, reported on the needs for scientific manpower.<sup>11</sup>

Oriental, Slavonic, East European, and African studies were considered in the 1947 report of the Scarbrough Committee, appointed by the Foreign Office.<sup>12</sup> Two other bodies of enquiry, established by the Ministry of Education to survey subjects mostly outside the jurisdiction of the universities, but whose reports nevertheless affected university development, were the McNair Committee on teacher training (1944) and the Percy Committee on higher technological education (1945).<sup>13</sup>

The cumulative effect on university-state relations of these committees of enquiry and the other national developments cited above may, for the sake of clarity, be considered under four headings: (1) the huge increase in the national grant to be distributed by the U.G.C.; (2) the broadening of the U.G.C.'s terms of reference (see p. 58); (3) modifications in the U.G.C.'s organizational structure; and (4) changes in the U.G.C.'s procedures for allocating grants, including both the types of activities and the number of institutions aided. (The increases in government-sponsored research and in state scholarships which resulted from committee recommendations will be dealt with in the next chapter, as they do not directly concern the U.G.C.)

#### INCREASE OF THE NATIONAL GRANT

The reports of the various committees of enquiry reinforced the government's decision to expand radically the national grant to the universities, since the separate recommendations for such improved facilities as classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and hostels, and for greater numbers of staff and students in the various fields of study surveyed

*Report* (1944), Cmd. 6517; Committee on Agricultural Education in Scotland, *Report* (1945), Cmd. 6704; Committee on Higher Agricultural Education in England and Wales, *Report* (1946), Cmd. 6728.

<sup>10</sup> Inter-departmental Committee on Medical Education, *Report* (1944); Inter-departmental Committee on Dentistry, *Report* (1946), Cmd. 6727.

<sup>11</sup> Committee on the Provision for Social and Economic Research, *Report* (1946), Cmd. 6868; Committee on Scientific Manpower, *Report* (1946), Cmd. 6824.

<sup>12</sup> Inter-departmental Commission of Enquiry on Oriental, Slavonic, East European and African Studies, *Report* (1947).

<sup>13</sup> Committee on Teachers and Youth Leaders, *Report* (1944); Special Committee on Higher Technological Education, *Report* (1945).

amounted collectively to a very costly program. The Barlow Committee *Report*, in particular, gained public attention with its emphatic assertion that, if the nation were not to suffer an acute shortage of trained personnel, the number of scientists and technologists had to be doubled within ten years. It added that, although the Barlow Committee was not competent to determine what was the proper amount of increase, the number of arts students might also be substantially enlarged, provided there were sufficient employment to absorb them.<sup>14</sup>

By 1947, the Labour Party having come to power, another series of major government decisions involving university grants had to be made as a result of the convergence of three conditions: First, the two-year grant to the universities, approved by Sir John Anderson, was about to lapse; second, most of the committees of enquiry had reported, recommending an immense expansion of higher education; and third, the university building programs were in dire financial straits, a condition that was holding back badly needed developments in educational policy.

In March, 1947, Hugh Dalton, Chancellor of the Exchequer, notified Parliament that to meet these problems he was reintroducing the quinquennial system for the period 1947-1952 and raising the national grant for the current year, 1947-48, to £9,000,000, after which it was to rise gradually to £12,000,000 by the end of the quinquennium. Furthermore, he accepted in principle the provisions of the U.G.C. Memorandum of January, 1947, outlining the universities' capital-expansion needs, although he pointed out that because of steel and other shortages, it was not likely that more than £20,000,000 of the recommended £50,000,000 could be spent for buildings, sites, and equipment.<sup>15</sup> Concerning the almost doubled rate of recurrent grants, Dalton promised the universities, "I am prepared to ask Parliament to increase [them] still further for well considered plans."<sup>16</sup>

As it turned out, a variety of circumstances, chief among which were the effects of further inflation, the inclusion of new types of aided education (discussed later in this chapter), and above all the necessity to raise academic salaries substantially in 1949 (to parallel the raises just given to doctors by the National Health Service), combined to make even the greatly increased recurrent grants insufficient to accomplish their purposes. As a result, Sir Stafford Cripps, the new Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1948, showed his determination, notwithstanding the

<sup>14</sup> (Barlow) Committee on Scientific Manpower, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

<sup>15</sup> U.G.C., *Univ. Devel. 1935-1947*, p. 11.

<sup>16</sup> In an open letter to the universities, *Universities Quarterly*, 1 (1946), 12.



darkness of the economic outlook at that time, to meet the expanded needs of the universities by arranging for the total quinquennial grant to be raised from the originally planned £53,000,000 to £65,500,000. He later justified this action on the general grounds that "it is on the advances that we make in scientific knowledge and on the energy, initiative, directive capacity and courage of these young graduates that the economic future of the country will largely depend."<sup>17</sup>

In the six years after the Conservatives returned to power (1951), with R. A. B. Butler, Harold Macmillan, and Peter Thorneycroft successively serving as Chancellor of the Exchequer, there were no signs of a trend toward governmental parsimony regarding university grants. To the contrary, the annual recurrent grant jumped to £20,000,000 in 1952-53 and rose gradually to £25,000,000 by 1956-57. Nonrecurrent grants, however, were still authorized only on a year by year basis, owing to government uncertainty about inflationary pressures exerted by the national building program. They hovered around £6,000,000 for several years and then climbed to £10,000,000 by 1957-58.

It can thus be seen that the rise in the national grants between 1945 and 1957 from £2,000,000 to £35,000,000 annually was perhaps the greatest contributing factor in the ambitious expansion of university plant, staff, student body, and curricula. The national grants during this period came to an impressive total of approximately £232,000,000 (see Appendix III).

#### U.G.C. TERMS OF REFERENCE ENLARGED

The idea of giving the U.G.C. more positive terms of reference began to gain momentum when it became obvious that the energetic role forced on the Grants Committee by the approach and outbreak of war and by the necessity for postwar coordination no longer accorded with the rather passive powers originally assigned to it.

The influential Barlow Committee (on scientific manpower), reporting in May, 1946, had some incisive comments to make in this regard:

We must here record that we are unanimously opposed to any infringement of the cherished independence of the Universities, even if it could be justified on the ground that it would facilitate the execution of [our recommended] expansion programme. We do not, however, believe that the maintenance of the Universities' independence is in any way incompatible with the extension and improvement of the machinery for adjusting their policy to the needs of the country. . . . *the State has perhaps been over-concerned lest there should be even a suggestion of interference with the independence of the Universities. . . . we think that circumstances demand that it should increasingly concern itself with positive University policy.* It may be

<sup>17</sup> News report, *Universities Quarterly*, 2 (1948), 215.

desirable for this purpose to revise [the U.G.C.'s] terms of reference and strengthen its machinery. [Emphasis added.]<sup>18</sup>

In July, 1946, the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals issued "A Note on University Policy and Finance in the Decennium 1947-56" in order to present the collective views of its members on the issues arising out of the succession of committee reports dealing with university activities. In this very significant document, the Vice-Chancellors' Committee stated that

... the universities entirely accepted the view that the Government has not only the right, but also the duty, of satisfying itself that every field of study which in the national interest ought to be cultivated in Great Britain is, in fact, being adequately cultivated in the university system, and that the resources which are placed at the disposal of the universities are being used with full regard both to efficiency and economy.... The universities may properly be expected not only individually to make proper use of the resources entrusted to them, but also collectively to devise and execute policies calculated to serve the national interest, and in that task, both individually and collectively, *they will be glad to have a greater measure of guidance from the Government than until quite recent days they have been accustomed to receive.* [Emphasis added.]<sup>19</sup>

Soon thereafter, on July 30, 1946, the Chancellor of the Exchequer told Parliament that since the universities had entered into a new phase of rapid expansion and of planned development, he was anxious that the U.G.C. should serve a more positive and influential function than it had served in the past. He then announced the following new terms of reference:

To enquire into the financial needs of university education in Great Britain; to advise the Government as to the application of any grants made by Parliament towards meeting them; to collect, examine, and make available information relating to university education throughout the United Kingdom . . . ; and to assist, in consultation with the universities and other bodies concerned, the preparation and execution of such plans for the development of the universities as may from time to time be required in order to ensure that they are fully adequate to national needs. [Emphasis added.]<sup>20</sup>

The U.G.C., for its part, envisaged its new relationship with the universities as a "form of partnership," and denied the view of some cynics that "the principles of central planning and of academic autonomy are . . . irreconcilable opposites."<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup> (Barlow) Committee on Scientific Manpower, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

<sup>19</sup> As quoted in H. W. Dodds, L. M. Hacker, and L. Rogers, *Government Assistance to Universities in Great Britain* (1952), p. 56.

<sup>20</sup> *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, 5th ser., Vol. 426 (July 30, 1946), col. 129. Omitted from the paragraph quoted above is a stipulation, since dropped, that the U.G.C. collect and disseminate information on university education abroad.

<sup>21</sup> U.G.C., *Univ. Devel. 1935-1947*, p. 82.

## THE UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION MODIFIED

The University Grants Committee had already modified one of its organizational rules in 1943, when the practice of excluding from the committee's membership men or women actively engaged in university teaching or research was discontinued. As five members of the new Grants Committee, which was expanded in 1943 to fifteen people, were of the new younger category, the average age dropped well below its previous level of seventy.

The Grants Committee was later enlarged to include eighteen members; each was appointed for a five-year period, but they were often asked to serve a second quinquennium. According to Sir Keith Murray:

... the members are not selected as representatives of any particular interest; the over-ruling consideration is that they should personally carry the confidence of the Chancellor [of the Exchequer] and of the Universities, though attention is also paid to achieving some balance in the academic membership both geographically and with reference to the most important interests in University teaching and research.<sup>22</sup>

The University Grants Committee in 1956 consisted of nine members in active university service, three college heads (one retired and two active), three men of affairs from industry and commerce, a chief education officer of one of Britain's largest cities, and the headmaster of a famous grammar school.

In 1946, as the tasks of the U.G.C. became heavier, a full-time deputy chairman was appointed and the administrative and clerical staff was strengthened. The 1956 staff included a secretary, a deputy secretary, two assistant secretaries, and about fifteen office workers. The 1955-56 administrative budget, including traveling expenses and fees of committee members (who still are paid only expenses and an honorarium of five guineas a day), was expected to total approximately £30,000.<sup>23</sup>

CHANGES IN UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMITTEE PROCEDURES  
FOR ALLOCATING GRANTS

On the recommendation of the Loveday Committee (see p. 72), the responsibility for national grants to agricultural education (but not to agricultural research) was transferred in 1947 from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries to the University Grants Committee. The Loveday Committee made this observation:

Although the hand of the Ministry of Agriculture does not seem to have lain heavily on the universities, the exercise by a government department of financial control

<sup>22</sup> Sir Keith Murray, "The Work of the University Grants Committee in Great Britain," *Universiteit en Hogeschool*, 1 (1955), 254.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 255.

over a single faculty or department of a university is liable to lead more readily than the administration of a comprehensive grant to unwarrantable interference in the affairs of the university.<sup>24</sup>

Somewhat later, as a result of government acceptance of the recommendations of other committees of enquiry, the University Grants Committee extended its coverage of subjects a bit further to include distribution of grants to veterinary education and forestry.

U.G.C. jurisdiction was extended in a different way in 1946 when the university colleges of Hull and Leicester were added to the national grant list. Both institutions, with the added help of state funds, embarked on a vigorous policy of expansion and, as a result, Hull received a university charter in 1954 and Leicester in 1957. (Nottingham, Southampton, and Exeter, which as university colleges had long been on the U.G.C. grant list, received their university charters in 1948, 1952, and 1955 respectively.)

The other addition to the national grant list in the postwar period was made as a consequence of the U.G.C. decision to support the experimental University College of North Staffordshire, which received its royal charter in 1949. This college, the inspiration of Lord Lindsay of Birker and the citizens of the Stoke-on-Trent area, who had long sought the establishment of such an institution, represented a break with tradition in three different ways. For one thing, its four-year curriculum was expressly aimed at avoiding what its founders regarded as the excessive specialization of other universities' three-year curricula. And since this new experimental program made it impossible to prepare students for the University of London's external degree, the University College of North Staffordshire asked for and received the unique authority to confer its own degree of Bachelor of Arts under the sponsorship of Oxford, Manchester, and Birmingham Universities. The final innovation, and the one most interesting in connection with this study, was the agreement given by the U.G.C. to furnish major financial assistance to this institution, which had no private sources of income other than its fees and a small grant from the North Staffordshire Local Authority. Until that time the sponsors of a new university college had always been expected to raise or provide the funds required to commence such a venture and to give it at least a modest endowment.

The heavier administrative burden cast on the U.G.C. by the increasing number of activities and institutions receiving state aid and by the recommendations of the various committees of enquiry led to the

<sup>24</sup> Committee on Higher Agricultural Education in England and Wales, *op. cit.* (in n. 9, above), p. 74.

creation of numerous specialist subcommittees to advise the U.G.C. on their respective fields. The subcommittees included some coöpted outside experts and covered the topics of science, technology, works and buildings, and all the subjects for which earmarked funds (discussed below) were recommended: medical and dental education, agricultural and veterinary studies, teacher education, the social sciences, Oriental and African studies, and Slavonic and East European studies. The subcommittees on the three subjects last named were disbanded in 1952, when the earmarked grants were merged with the general block grants; the others were still functioning in 1957.

The system of earmarked grants instituted in 1947 represented a distinct departure from the U.G.C.'s traditional procedure of allocating block grants. (For a 1905 precedent of a predecessor to the Grants Committee, however, see page 53 above.) Earmarking was justified by the U.G.C. as a *temporary* expedient, on the grounds that

... without some plain indication of the amount of the new money intended for the financing of such developments, it would be a difficult and invidious task for the universities to effect the rapid readjustments in the proportionate rates of expenditure on different departments which national consideration may demand.<sup>25</sup>

The U.G.C. consoled itself somewhat with the thought that no institution would be forced to accept an earmarked grant against its will, but even this did not prevent some university grumbling. The vice-chancellor of Oxford University, for instance, noted in 1948:

... we are in danger of being killed by kindness ... An embarrassing problem is created by the very large grant which the U.G.C. is earmarking for Social Studies, the present popular emphasis upon which may or may not be temporary.

... the amount of earmarked money which can be absorbed by an institution without loss of independence depends largely upon how much free money there is to balance it.<sup>26</sup>

It was therefore with obvious relief that the U.G.C. announced in 1952 the end of the system of earmarked grants. Its sense of responsibility to the government prompted the committee to add a qualification to its decision—the hope that the specially aided fields of study would henceforth be treated “no less favourably than other departments” and that the U.G.C. would be consulted before any major reductions concerning them were made.<sup>27</sup> The earmarked grants of the quinquennium 1947–1952 had totaled approximately £18,700,000 and constituted nearly 30 per cent of the recurrent grants of that period.

<sup>25</sup> U.G.C., *Univ. Devel. 1935–1947*, p. 78.

<sup>26</sup> *Oxford University Gazette*, October 8, 1948.

<sup>27</sup> U.G.C., *University Development, Report on the Years 1947 to 1952* (1953), Cmd. 8875, p. 52.

Another vital, and more permanent, change in university-state relations affecting the U.G.C. was the government's increasing postwar influence in the universities' capital-expansion programs. Before the war, as the U.G.C. pointed out later, "the cost of capital projects [had] to be defrayed almost entirely from private sources. Progress was always taking place, but its pace was dictated for the most part by factors other than the Government grant."<sup>28</sup> But in the period immediately after the war, the U.G.C. came to play a crucial role in this area, owing on the one hand to its supplying capital funds on an unprecedented scale, and on the other to the government's temporary requirement of U.G.C. approval for the release of scarce labor and materials for university work. Even in 1957, when shortages had become less acute, the U.G.C. still established a system of national priorities for those projects financed in whole or in part by public money. This holds true even for a project in which the first stage of a new facility is financed exclusively by the universities, for the U.G.C., coming in later, might find the state committed to some continuing expense which would not necessarily rank high in the national interest.

This increase in the variety and complexity of U.G.C. duties has necessitated better liaison with the other governmental bodies interested in university education, such as the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, and the various research councils. These bodies all appoint assessors, who are entitled to attend meetings of the Grants Committee and to take part in the discussions, but have neither voting power nor corresponding responsibility for the decisions adopted. Furthermore, interlocking arrangements have been made, according to which a member of the U.G.C. sits on the Advisory Council on Scientific Policy (discussed below) and the chairman of that Council is appointed to the U.G.C. Subcommittee on Technological Studies.

Aside from the changes discussed above, the U.G.C. continues to operate in its traditional pattern: official visits ("in no sense inspections or cross-examinations"<sup>29</sup>) are made to every institution on the grant list during an eighteen-month period in the middle of each quinquennium. On these occasions, the visitors attempt to familiarize themselves with the general nature of each university's problems and usually talk with a cross section of the administrators and members of the faculty and student body. Special visits are also made by members of the subcommittees to review the subjects of their particular concern.

<sup>28</sup> U.G.C., *Univ. Devel. 1935-1947*, p. 77.

<sup>29</sup> Sir Keith Murray, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

More important than these formal quinquennial events, however, are "the continuous informal contacts between the officers of the Universities and the officers of the Committee, by personal visits, by correspondence and by telephone. . . . There are few developments of any importance within any University about which the officers of the Committee have not been informed in advance."<sup>20</sup>

After the round of official visits, appraisals are made of the universities' estimates of their needs for the next quinquennium, and the Grants Committee then advises the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the total sum which it recommends be made available during the next five years.

Then consultations between the U.G.C. and the Treasury are held, following which the Chancellor decides, in the context of the nation's general financial situation, what over-all sum he will ask Parliament to vote. Until 1957, once this figure had been announced in the Commons, the Grants Committee set about to interview representatives of each university concerning further details of its estimated needs, and on the basis of the information thus compiled, the total grant was then allocated among the various institutions. Since 1957 this somewhat repetitious and time-consuming step has been eliminated, and the U.G.C. allocates the grants without any further intermediate steps.

Sir Keith Murray, chairman of the U.G.C. since 1952, has asserted that the grants are not made under any "set of regulations or . . . hard and fast formulas." The number of variables, he explained, is very great, for

. . . they must include recognition of numbers of students, the differences in cost of different types of subjects, the balance of teaching and research, the relative importance of the various proposals for expansion, the institution's access to other sources of money, administrative efficiency and numerous other factors, both tangible and intangible.<sup>21</sup>

In former years, after the periods of visitation and allocation, the Grants Committee lapsed into relative idleness. But with the increase in its duties, the U.G.C. now holds eleven meetings annually, year in and year out, to deal with the agenda of current problems and future planning. Agenda are prepared for these meetings, at which a variety of issues, from general policy to minute details of building programs, may be discussed. The committee is often guided by memoranda from its subcommittees, and this is particularly true for the highly technical matter of capital expansion.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 257-258.

## THE GRANTS COMMITTEE SUBJECTED TO CRITICAL SCRUTINY

It was only to be expected, perhaps, that a body made responsible for the onerous task of reconciling the principle of university autonomy with the principles of national planning and the accountability of public funds<sup>32</sup> should be subject to some critical comment. Given the sensitivity of academicians on the one hand, and of politicians on the other, it seems little short of miraculous that there has not been more.

The criticisms which have been made have concerned both procedural and substantive matters. Parliamentary committees, for example, have shown some uneasiness over the U.G.C.'s immunity from normal governmental financial controls. A more basic questioning of the U.G.C.'s adequacy as an instrument for the over-all review of the university system has been raised by certain authors writing on "the crisis" in the universities. The former type of criticism (parliamentary) will not be dealt with here, as it is treated at length in chapter viii, but the latter is of special interest at this point.

The call for a rethinking in higher education arose out of the great body of critical literature on the universities which appeared during and after the war.<sup>33</sup> It had become apparent to all that the universities were at an important turning point in their development, and in consequence each nuance of university opinion had eventually to have a say on the question, *Quo vadis?* The authors of this literature, which is discussed at great length in George Kneller's *Higher Learning in Britain* (1955, chapters v-ix), were for the most part preoccupied with wider questions of educational policy rather than with the specific issue of university-state relations. Nevertheless, the various interpretations of "the crisis in the university" (a phrase used as the title of Sir Walter Moberly's book, published in 1949) often included pleas for a comprehensive survey of the university system as a whole, and these critics by no means always agreed that the U.G.C. was the proper agency to undertake such a review.

The nature of the problem was variously analyzed against edu-

<sup>32</sup> Accountability of public funds: the term widely used for the more accurate expression "accountability for the expenditure of public funds."

<sup>33</sup> J. D. Bernal, *The Social Function of Science* (1939); Adolf Löwe, *Universities in Transformation* (1940); F. R. Leavis, *Education and the University* (1943); Brian Simon, *A Student's View of the Universities* (1943); Bruce Truscot, *Redbrick University* (1943); A. S. Nash, *The University and the Modern World* (1945); Student Christian Movement, *University Pamphlets* (1946); Sir Ernest Barker, *British Universities* (1946); S. C. Roberts, *British Universities* (1947); Sir Frederick Ogilvie, *British Universities* (1948); Nuffield College, *The Problem Facing British Universities* (1948); Sir Richard Livingstone, *Some Thoughts on University Education* (1948); Sir Walter Moberly, *The Crisis in the University* (1949).



cational, social, political, and moral backgrounds. Bruce Truscot, for example, in *Redbrick University* (1943), advanced the educational ideal of

... an England ... in which there are no longer two large residential universities for those who are either well-to-do or brilliant, and nine smaller universities, mainly non-residential, for those who are neither. Let there be eleven, of approximately equal size, all in the main residential and each having certain schools in which it excels all the rest.<sup>31</sup>

Marxist criticisms, expressed by J. D. Bernal and Brian Simon, went a great deal further: "The educational system in this country is essentially a class system. ... It is in accord with the morality of a capitalistic society that position can be bought with money and without reference to comparative merit and ability."<sup>32</sup>

From the opposing humanist camp came the contention of Professor F. R. Leavis that it was

... more than ever the *raison d'être* of a university to be, amid the material and de-humanising complications of the modern world, a focus of humane consciousness, a centre where, faced with the specialisations and distractions in which human ends lose themselves, intelligence, bringing to bear a mature sense of values, should apply itself to the problems of civilisation.<sup>33</sup>

By happy coincidence, Professor Leavis' own subject, English literature, was deemed to be the proper "non-specialist centre of consciousness" around which the other disciplines were to be integrated.

Dr. Adolph Löwe, on the other hand, posited the social sciences as the proper components of a new humanist synthesis through which the universities could educate enlightened experts to fill key posts in government and business and to aid in the planning of society.<sup>34</sup>

Between 1944 and 1947 this theme of producing qualified experts for a society in a state of rapid change increasingly came to be the central focus of discussions about university education. The relevant publications of the Association of University Teachers, the British Association, and the Association of Scientific Workers have been cited earlier in this chapter, as were the reports of the various governmental committees of enquiry (see page 72).

However, these reports and their recommendations, while "solving" the matter of national needs in specific areas of learning, at the same time intensified the wider problem of balance and direction in uni-

<sup>31</sup> Truscot, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

<sup>32</sup> Simon, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

<sup>33</sup> Leavis, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>34</sup> Löwe, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

versity studies. Commenting on this situation, Sir Richard Livingstone wrote in 1948: "University education has grown up in the casual English way. It has never been viewed, much less planned, as a whole. A cynic might give a book on the subject the title of *Drift*."<sup>38</sup>

It was just such a "whole view" that was advocated in several different quarters between 1947 and 1949. Lord Lindsay of Birker raised the question in a House of Lords debate on university education on May 14, 1947. The following year Nuffield College, Oxford, published a collective study called *The Problem Facing British Universities*, which reviewed the variety of demands then being made on the universities, and concluded: "There is a prior need of defining the specific function of the university and relating it to the functions of other institutions. It is, to say the least, a possibility that in the endeavour to give everyone what they want, the Universities may end in giving nobody what they want."<sup>39</sup>

The U.G.C., in its report, *University Development from 1935 to 1947*, similarly pointed out the danger to a balanced university curriculum that might result from automatic acceptance of uncoordinated outside demands for services, and urged the universities to examine carefully their relations with their communities.<sup>40</sup> This document, however, drew criticism in an editorial in the *Universities Quarterly* which pointed out that

... when an effort is made to discover [in the report] what the needs of the community are, and how they were ascertained, it is difficult to find them presented except in terms of the special areas that are being developed in addition to the traditional faculty organisation. . . . One misses a definite statement on the place of the university in the community, a statement which is particularly needed today when so many references are vaguely made to "the university in the service of the community."<sup>41</sup>

The conservative academicians were not at all reticent about expressing their misgivings over the increasing involvement of universities in state planning and in questions of the "national need." At the Sixth Congress of the Universities of the Commonwealth, in 1948, Professor John MacMurray stated emphatically that "the technological obsession is the crisis in our Western culture." By "obsession" he explained that he meant the habit of thinking and behaving as though all problems were technical problems; as though all difficulties could be solved by more technical knowledge and skill, plus better planning and organization.

<sup>38</sup> Livingstone, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>39</sup> Nuffield College, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

<sup>40</sup> U.G.C., *Univ. Devel. 1935-1947*, pp. 13-14.

<sup>41</sup> *Universities Quarterly*, 3 (1949), pp. 531-532.

In social life [Professor MacMurray continued] it shows itself in a tendency toward the apotheosis of the State, which is, of course, the technological institution of society *par excellence*, the focus of organisation and the coordinating centre of social techniques. Cultural institutions, such as Universities . . . begin to be looked on as subordinate mechanisms in the general technology of the State—their function being to produce the technicians and specialists necessary to “run the country.”<sup>42</sup>

It was left to Sir Walter Moberly, however, to present the most searching of university critiques, in his book, mentioned earlier, *The Crisis in the University*. From his vantage point as a former professor, former Vice-Chancellor of Manchester University, and chairman of the Grants Committee since 1935, Sir Walter was able to integrate many of the various strands of concern about the universities, and concentrated in particular on the issues raised by the Student Christian Movement in its series of *University Pamphlets* published in 1946, and by Arnold Nash in his 1945 study, *The University and the Modern World*.

It would not be appropriate here to attempt a thorough review of Moberly's controversial book.<sup>43</sup> In essence, after expressing disquiet over the universities' seeming failure to stimulate in the students a personal philosophy of life and an awareness of the necessity for making conscious moral and religious choices, he contended that:

. . . the whole aim and basis of the university life must be investigated; its curriculum of studies, its method of teaching, its way of life and its relationship to society must be reconsidered if the “deep-seated disabilities” from which it now suffers are to be removed. The task is of the greatest urgency; the sands are running out.<sup>44</sup>

Although Moberly was addressing this appeal specifically to the Christian members of the university staff and student body, asking them to survey the work of their respective institutions, other people before and after Moberly felt that a “crisis” of this magnitude necessitated action of a more forceful and widespread character.

Lord Lindsay, for example, had called attention in his House of Lords speech to several major questions which he felt should be included in a badly needed comprehensive survey of the university system. He urged: “The Government have been most generous in

<sup>42</sup> John MacMurray, in “A Critical View of the Structural and Moral Changes Produced in Society by Scientific and Technological Advance,” in Sixth Congress of the Universities of the Commonwealth, *Report of the Proceedings* (1948), pp. 103-104.

<sup>43</sup> For lively exchanges occasioned by *The Crisis in the University*, see Michael Oakeshott, “The Universities,” *Cambridge Journal*, 2 (1949), 515-542; Moberly's reply, “The Universities,” *Cambridge Journal*, 3 (1950), 195-213; P. Mansell Jones, “A Debate on the ‘Crisis,’” *Universities Review*, n.s., Vol. 23, No. 2 (January, 1951), pp. 117-121; and the Home Universities Conference, *Report of the Proceedings* (1949).

<sup>44</sup> As succinctly summarized by Oakeshott, *op. cit.*, p. 517.

providing money for the expansion of the universities. Will they provide just a little of that rarer quality—reflection on the subject?"<sup>45</sup>

Lindsay contended that neither the U.G.C. nor a royal commission was the proper agent to provide that "reflection." The latter not only would take too long, but would overburden university staffs already exhausted by their present tasks. The former, he said, was a most admirable institution, but he questioned whether, as a committee whose business centered year after year in giving grants to the universities, it was in the best position "to look at the whole set-up, with the idea, perhaps, of some revolutionary change." In the concluding speech of the debate, Lord Lindsay answered his own question: "I have an uneasy suspicion that if only the U.G.C. or even that other great body . . . , the Vice-Chancellors' Committee, were asked to report on this matter, you would find how surprisingly satisfactory everything was."<sup>46</sup>

His reservations about the U.G.C. stemmed also from the fear that there existed a "certain temptation on the part of the body representing universities . . . not to do justice to the problem of the technical institutes." Lord Lindsay proposed, therefore, the appointment of a departmental committee (probably of the Treasury, though not specified) on which the U.G.C. would be well represented.

Lord Jowitt, replying for the Labour Government, welcomed the suggestion for an over-all survey, but rejected the idea of a second committee in the field. If two such committees were to disagree with each other, the Government would be "in a great difficulty."

Lord Lindsay's speech and proposals aroused widespread comment in university circles. Lord Simon of Wythenshawe, chairman of the Council of Manchester University, gave his approval on the general subject of the proposed survey, but felt that, for dealing with the *administrative* issues raised by Lord Lindsay, the U.G.C. would be capable of acting as the investigating agency, especially in view of the recent strengthening of that committee. For questions concerning the aims and methods of university teaching, however, Lord Simon felt that there should be some British equivalent of the study of the Harvard University committee which produced the book, *General Education in a Free Society*; but he left open the question of which agency should implement his proposal—"the Vice-Chancellors and Principals' Committee? the U.G.C.? the Nuffield Trustees? or the proposed Joint Universities Council?"<sup>47</sup>

<sup>45</sup> *Parl. Deb. (Lords)*, 5th ser., Vol. 147 (May 14, 1947), cols. 696 ff.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, col. 742.

<sup>47</sup> Lord Simon of Wythenshawe, *Universities Quarterly*, 1 (1947), p. 325.

The Nuffield study noted that the Grants Committee arrangement had worked so smoothly that "a revolution in the financial relation of Government and universities has taken place without either Parliament or the universities being forced to consider it." But, the study continued, there is an increasing need for continuous and comprehensive coördination of university policy in a way not at present provided, "and the alternative to a development of the University Grants Committee's activity in the making of policy will be some new *ad hoc* organ."<sup>48</sup> The Nuffield group declined, however, to state its opinion on the adequacy of the U.G.C. for this expanded task.

The editors of *Nature* ("A Weekly Journal of Science") criticized the authors of the Nuffield study for this failure to commit themselves on the proper body to conduct the long-range review and coördination of policy. The editors agreed with Lord Lindsay that the U.G.C. was too dedicated to the existing university system to be the best agency for an objective evaluation of it. In particular, they considered the U.G.C.'s allegedly weak liaison with secondary schools and technical colleges to be a strong reason for disqualification. *Nature* favored instead a royal commission, and answered the charges that it would take up too much of the administrators' time by pointing out that "... failure to conduct this survey may, and almost certainly will, involve waste of manpower at all levels immensely out of proportion to that involved in conducting the survey."<sup>49</sup> The editors argued that the temporary brake on capital expansion then imposed by building conditions throughout the nation would provide the necessary breathing space for such a review, and, furthermore, that much of the basic information had already been gathered by various interested groups.

A royal commission was also preferred by John Murray, Principal of University College, Exeter, but one, he stipulated, with its terms of reference limited to those English universities commonly referred to as civic or modern universities. He pointed out that Oxford, Cambridge, the Universities of London, Durham, and Wales, and the Scottish universities had all had their royal commissions, but that the modern universities, after a long period of "half-measures, make-shifts and deprivations," might find the new government money being offered them and the U.G.C. invitation to double their size a little "dazzling." Careful thinking was required about where they were going and how. In particular, the royal commission was needed in order to counter the separatism of the arts and the sciences, which had gone too far for the universities to handle alone. He justified this plea for

<sup>48</sup> Nuffield College, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-107.

<sup>49</sup> *Nature* (Editorial), Vol. 162, No. 4114 (1948), p. 350.

outside intervention with the observation, "defeatist misgiving among the humanists and the triumphancy of science preclude a concordat; only authoritative intervention from outside can effect it."<sup>50</sup>

When, however, several proposals were later made in the Commons for a royal commission on the "role of the universities," the Government's response was invariably a firm "no." For example, the Prime Minister replied, on June 19, 1953: "I see no reason to be dissatisfied with the way in which the needs of society have been met by the universities. I do not think that the appointment of a Royal Commission would be a suitable way of dealing with a matter which requires to be under constant notice by the Government."<sup>51</sup>

In addition to the proposal for setting up a departmental committee or royal commission to investigate the university system, a plan was also advanced for the creation of a nongovernmental agency to discuss long-range university policies and problems. The Association of University Teachers had urged as early as 1943 that an Academic Council (also sometimes called a Joint Universities Council) be established as a forum for the discussion of all matters affecting university life and development. Membership was to be widely representative of university teachers and administrators, of the professions, industry and labor, and of the public and social state services.<sup>52</sup> Replying to criticism of this scheme, a proponent commented:

Anxiety has been expressed that the universities would lose an essential part of their independence if such matters... were to be entrusted to an inter-university Council. It should be stressed, however, that if these matters are not discussed openly and democratically, they will in any case be decided, either through a lack of policy... or through a policy decided elsewhere.<sup>53</sup>

Lord Simon looked with some favor on such a proposed Council to discuss university policy: "Both the U.G.C. and the Vice-Chancellors' Committee have become powerful planning bodies. Unless there is free and full public discussion of their work, they may perhaps prove to be too powerful."<sup>54</sup> When, however, he introduced a discussion at the Home Universities Conference in 1947 on the feasibility of establishing some type of University Parliament, the proposal was not well

<sup>50</sup> John Murray, "The Need for a Royal Commission," *Universities Quarterly*, 1 (1947), 383 ff.

<sup>51</sup> *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, 5th ser., Vol. 516 (June 19, 1953), cols. 95-96; see also Vol. 514 (April 30, 1953), col. 119, and Vol. 531 (July 26, 1954), cols. 130 ff.

<sup>52</sup> Association of University Teachers, *Report on University Development* (1943), pars. 63-65.

<sup>53</sup> Roy Pascal, "An Academic Council of the British Universities," *Universities Review*, n.s., Vol. 18, No. 1 (November, 1945), pp. 66-68.

<sup>54</sup> Lord Simon of Wythenshawe, *Universities Quarterly*, 1 (1947), 190-192.

received. British dislike of elaborate formal organizations was never more in evidence. As a result, no new machinery has since been created to deal specifically with the issues of long-term university policy.

#### FACTORS STRENGTHENING EXISTING MACHINERY

Three conditions, developing over the past decade, have gradually lessened the need for any such new organ of review. In the first place, the Grants Committee has found more time for dealing with long-term questions than some of its critics in the mid-1940's believed would ever be available. With an enlarged and revitalized membership, a strengthened staff, and the advantage of additional experience, the U.G.C. no longer finds its energies completely absorbed by month-to-month administrative tasks, as tended to be the case during the crucial period of expansion leading up to the 1947 quinquennial estimates. Now, except in the years immediately preceding and following the setting of the five-year grants, the U.G.C.'s operations generally permit some consideration of less pressing questions. As an example of this kind of activity (over and beyond those regularly undertaken by the standing subcommittees), the U.G.C. announced in 1957 the appointment of a new *ad hoc* subcommittee

... to consider and report on the nature and importance of the role which should be played by halls of residence in the education of university students, and its relationship to that of other forms of student organisation; the manner in which halls of residence should be administered and staffed in order to carry out this role; and the arrangements within universities for formulating policy on these matters and for supervising its execution.<sup>55</sup>

Second, even though a Joint Universities Council was not deemed desirable in 1947, other modes of consultation and discussion among university faculty members and students have continued to flourish in great variety. Sir Hector Hetherington has called this voluntary coöperation a "counterbalancing" of increased state interest in the universities. He feels that by encouraging it, the universities, without deliberate planning, have initiated a trend toward greater communication which "is not yet finished."<sup>56</sup> Examples of this type of group collaboration may be seen in the national organizations of the Association of University Teachers and the National Union of Students, in the annual Home Conferences and the Quinquennial Congresses of the Universities of the Commonwealth (sponsored respectively by the

<sup>55</sup> U.G.C., *University Development, Interim Report on the Years 1952 to 1956* (1957), Cmnd. 79, p. 10 and Appendix III.

<sup>56</sup> Sir Hector Hetherington, *The British University System, 1911-1954*, Aberdeen University Studies, No. 133 (1954), p. 7.

Vice-Chancellors' Committee and the Association of the Universities of the British Commonwealth), in the various specialists' professional societies, and finally, in numerous faculty and student discussion groups, such as the Student Christian Movement.

And, third, the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals was, like the U.G.C., strengthened administratively in 1946, and has since evolved more effective procedures for promoting interuniversity co-ordination and discussion. When the Vice-Chancellors' Committee sent its "Note on University Policy and Finance" to the universities, it also asked them to quadruple their grant to the central secretariat (known since 1948 as the Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth). Lord Simon commented in February, 1947, that university compliance with this request would be "implicitly a vote of confidence in the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals as the official negotiating body on behalf of the universities."<sup>77</sup>

The vote of confidence *was* forthcoming, and the Vice-Chancellors' Committee was able to step up its operations to match the increased activity of the Grants Committee. In July, 1946, for example, it appointed an independent Commission on the Planning of University Halls of Residence, composed of five university officers with Mr. (later Sir) Keith Murray as chairman. This Commission reported in 1948.<sup>78</sup>

A slightly different mode of procedure was followed in March, 1953, when a subcommittee of the Vice-Chancellors' Committee itself was established "to report on the position in regard to university entrance requirements and to make recommendations."<sup>79</sup> Membership of the subcommittee was divided between nine university members (some of them from the Vice-Chancellors' Committee) and nine headmasters and headmistresses.

Still another variation of the procedure of the Vice-Chancellors' Committee was evident in its recommendation to the universities that they themselves appoint a special committee on university technical staffs. (This was done when it began to be impossible to maintain the system of local settlements of rates of wages and conditions of service in the face of the growing unionization of such auxiliary staffs.) In this case, other than making the initial suggestion, the Vice-Chancellors' Committee as such played no further part in the negotiations.

<sup>77</sup> Lord Simon of Wythenshawe, *Universities Quarterly*, 1 (1947), p. 190.

<sup>78</sup> Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, (Report of a Special Commission) *The Planning of University Halls of Residence* (1948).

<sup>79</sup> Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, *Report of a Sub-Committee on University Entrance Requirements* (1955), p. 5.



The Committee does, however, play a significant role in negotiations concerning salaries paid to university faculty members. This matter has become the subject of some disagreement between the Association of University Teachers and some university administrators, but will not be treated here because of its greater relevance to chapter ix.

And, as a final example of new procedures, the Vice-Chancellors' Committee acted to cosponsor with the Federation of British Industries two conferences in 1950 and 1952 on the general topic, "The Universities and Industry." Discussion centered on the problems of preparing graduates for work in industry.

In spite of all this varied activity, however, the Vice-Chancellors' Committee neither has nor seeks formal executive authority. Although its views are generally much sought after by government departments, university governing boards, and the University Grants Committee, it has been careful to retain its informal consultative status. An American observer noted:

The Committee is typical of all the arrangements that have been effected in this area of university education. It issues no annual report [but see below]; its minutes are private, and while they go to its members, there was nothing to indicate that they were accessible to other persons in the universities; it rarely issues a public statement; no mention of it appears in the public press and rarely in journals devoted to educational matters. It does not work secretly; it is simply unobtrusive.<sup>60</sup>

While it is true that the Vice-Chancellors' Committee as such does not issue an annual report, there is a yearly account of the general nature of its business in the *Report of the Executive Council* of the Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth. This account provides an illuminating catalogue of the very wide range of topics discussed at committee meetings (see Appendix V). According to the 1956 *Report*, the Vice-Chancellors' Committee administrative expenses amounted to approximately £10,000 for the year 1954-55.<sup>61</sup> Some of this money has since been used to support modest research projects by university faculty members on key problems in higher education, such as a survey published in 1957 on student matriculation experiences in Britain.<sup>62</sup>

In view of the facts that the Vice-Chancellors' Committee is now playing a more vital role in coördinating university policies, that the Grants Committee is finding more time to consider long-range policy

<sup>60</sup> Dodds, Hacker, and Rogers, *op. cit.* (in n. 19, above), pp. 51-52.

<sup>61</sup> Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth, *Report of the Executive Council* (1956), p. 23.

<sup>62</sup> Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (R. K. Kelsall), *Report on an Enquiry into Applications for Admission to Universities* (1957).

questions, and that both of these agencies, aided by a broad spectrum of formal and informal organizations, are working to promote inter-university discussion and consultation, criticisms of the adequacy of existing machinery have mostly subsided. Indeed, Sir Ernest Barker's statement undoubtedly expresses the opinion of more people today than it did in 1948, when he declared, "...the joint action of the University Grants Committee and the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals may be trusted to guide the development of British Universities through the demands and problems of the future."<sup>100</sup>

However, to confine one's discussion of university development to a consideration only of the Grants Committee and the Vice-Chancellors' Committee is to misrepresent reality, for, as the next chapter will show, the universities are also greatly affected by the actions of numerous other departments and agencies in the government.

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<sup>100</sup> Barker, *op. cit.* (in n. 32, above), pp. 38-39.

## ADDITIONAL STATE ACTIVITIES AFFECTING THE UNIVERSITIES

THE GOVERNMENT activities other than those of the University Grants Committee that most directly and consistently affect the universities come from the following bodies: the Ministries of Education, Agriculture, Supply, and Labour; the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research; the Medical and Agricultural Research Councils; the Colonial Office; and the Civil Service Commission. One commentator has made some interesting observations about the universities' contacts with this multiplicity of agencies:

This jumble of departments controls the flow of students, the provision of jobs for graduates and the finance of research, and between them they settle the policy of the Universities, . . . or rather there are left in the interstices of inter-departmental confusion large spaces in which the Universities can still make their own policy.<sup>1</sup>

One need not endorse this point of view in order to agree that these agencies exercise a definite influence on university policy. The impact of their activities on the universities will be analyzed later, in chapter ix; at this point there will merely be offered a brief description of the general relevance of their activities to the universities.

### THE STATE AND UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS

Although some local authorities in England and Wales had begun making small student awards before World War I, the system of state scholarships was not inaugurated until 1920, when 200 awards were established—only to be suspended two years later at the time of the Geddes Economy Committee. The number of these awards was increased to 360 in 1936, 750 in 1947, 900 in 1950, 1,500 in 1952 (after the program of special teacher-training awards ended), and in 1954 reached the 2,000 mark recommended in April, 1948, by the Working Party on University Awards.

In 1946 two changes of the first magnitude occurred in the system of state scholarships. First, the £100-a-year maximum which the state would allow for maintenance (over and above tuition fees) was made a flexible figure, varying according to local costs of living, the type of residence accommodation, and parental income (that is, the "means test"). Furthermore, the state announced that it would augment the

<sup>1</sup> W. Maekenzie, in G. F. N. Champion *et al.*, *British Government Since 1918* (1951), pp. 66-67.

approximately 1,200 open scholarships and exhibitions (a kind of prize) offered by the universities in order to bring these awards into parity with the state scholarships. This eliminated the necessity for students to apply for state or local scholarships to supplement the value of their university awards, and thus, in effect, greatly increased the number of students who could receive assistance.

The Ministry of Education was also made responsible in the 1940's for administering the Further Education and Training Scheme, under which nearly 50,000 ex-servicemen and women were paid maintenance allowances and tuition fees while attending a university or university college. By 1955, however, there were only 461 students still enrolled under this program.

The local authorities were, in the mid-1950's, offering more than 10,000 awards, but these varied widely between areas with respect to their maximum value, their availability (measured in number per thousand of eligible students), and the criteria by which they were granted. Criticisms of the uneven nature of the local awards came from many sources, including the National Union of Students, the Association of University Teachers, and some Members of Parliament. However, the Ministry of Education reported in 1954 that 134 of the 146 local authorities had substantially adopted the minimum scholarship rates recommended by the Department's Advisory Memorandum No. 425 (June, 1952), and that all but 28 local authorities were for the most part using the standards and practices outlined in the Agreed Note on Procedure (February, 1953).<sup>2</sup>

As regards postgraduate awards, the state provided through the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (D.S.I.R.) about 400 advanced research studentships for work in pure and applied science, but until 1957 the only provision for postgraduate aid in the arts came either from state supplementation of university research awards or from extensions by the Minister of Education or the local authorities of particular undergraduate scholarships. In 1957, however, a new system of postgraduate aid was commenced, which provided for 250 awards in the arts, to be administered by the Ministry of Education with the advice of a specially appointed committee composed of university personnel, and for 900 research and advanced-course studentships in the sciences, to be distributed as before by the D.S.I.R.<sup>3</sup> Under the new policy, the state would no longer supplement the university postgraduate awards.

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Education, *Report for the Year 1953-54* (1955), Cmd. 9155, pp. 43-44.

<sup>3</sup> *Times Educational Supplement*, November 9, 1956.

It was intended that, as soon as possible, the "means test" would be dropped from the requirements for eligibility for the new arts awards—a requirement which, incidentally, has never been applied in the case of the D.S.I.R. awards. The means test has also been an object of widespread criticism—most particularly from those members of the middle classes who protest that they are squeezed between the rising costs of education (especially in public schools or residential universities) and the heavy burden of state taxes.

#### THE STATE AND UNIVERSITY RESEARCH

Besides continuing to utilize existing bodies such as the D.S.I.R. and the Agricultural and Medical Research Councils, the state soon after the war created new agencies to improve coördination of government policy on matters of scientific research. First, soon after the publication of the Barlow report on the scientific civil service in 1945, there was a complete reorganization of the pay scales and the conditions of employment of scientists in government service, to give them a status and opportunities for fundamental research comparable to those prevailing in universities. Once "parity" was approached, interchange between state laboratory and campus proved to be a feasible and fruitful operation.

In 1947 the Scientific Advisory Committee to the wartime cabinet was replaced by two bodies: the Defence Research Policy Committee, assisting the Minister of Defence, and the Advisory Council on Scientific Policy, advising the Lord President of the Privy Council on the general formulation of state scientific policy. Effective joint action was achieved between the former and the latter by virtue of their having a common chairman, Sir Henry Tizard. The interests of the universities and of the University Grants Committee were well represented, in that twelve of the fifteen members of the Advisory Council were appointed from university science staffs and included the then deputy chairman of the U.G.C. The Council established several subcommittees, among which the two most concerned with university affairs were those dealing with scientific manpower and with atomic energy.<sup>4</sup>

Stretching the definition of state-supported research to its broadest limits, it has been estimated that state financial aid to university research in 1955 from all the various governmental sources amounted to approximately £3,000,000, or 8.5 per cent of the total university income in Britain.<sup>5</sup> The Grants Committee had commented in 1951

<sup>4</sup> W. H. G. Armytage, *Civic Universities* (1955), p. 287.

<sup>5</sup> Sir Harold Himsforth, in "The Financing of Research in Universities by Outside Bodies," in Home Universities Conference, *Report of the Proceedings*, 1955, p. 68.

on a proportion not too different (7 per cent): "It seems evident that government departments and agencies are not making excessive demands upon universities for contract work, and that the funds so obtained do not constitute a large fraction of the income of the universities."<sup>6</sup>

The largest single sphere of knowledge being aided by government research funds is, not unexpectedly, that of nuclear physics. The government, after establishing its own atomic research center at Harwell in 1945, proceeded to allocate to the study of nuclear physics in the universities nearly one-half of the funds which the D.S.I.R. distributes in support of university research activities in general. Birmingham, Liverpool, Glasgow, Oxford, and Manchester were singled out for sizable capital grants in this field.

The development of atomic research was climaxed in 1957 by the government announcement in Parliament of the creation of a National Institute for Research in Nuclear Science, "to provide, for common use by universities and others, facilities and equipment which were beyond the scope of individual universities and institutions carrying out research in the nuclear field." Lord Bridges, who as Sir Edward Bridges had been Permanent Secretary to the Treasury until 1956, was appointed chairman of the governing board, and the remaining membership was distributed as follows: seven representatives from the universities, two members from the University Grants Committee, one from the Royal Society, three from the Atomic Energy Authority, and two from the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. The national grants were to be provided through the Lord President's Vote for Atomic Energy, while the universities' expenditures were to be confined to payment of the salaries and expenses of persons on their own academic staffs utilizing the research facilities.<sup>7</sup>

While these other government agencies aided specific research projects and developments, the Grants Committee had continued its work of generally building up the staff and facilities in scientific departments. In pursuance of recommendations in the Royal Society's "Report on the Needs of Research in Fundamental Science After the War," the U.G.C. Subcommittee on Science took evidence from a number of public and private bodies and private individuals, and then submitted recommendations to the parent committee on the best ways "to fill the gaps." Arrangements were subsequently made with various

<sup>6</sup> U.G.C., *University Development, Report on the Years 1947 to 1952* (1953), Cmd. 8875, p. 43. (Cited hereafter in this chapter as U.G.C., *Univ. Devel. 1947-1952*.) See also Select Committee on Estimates 1951-52, *Fifth Report*, H.C. 163, p. 60.

<sup>7</sup> *Times Educational Supplement*, February 22, 1957, p. 240.

universities for the establishment of posts in these comparatively neglected studies.

THE STATE, COLONIAL HIGHER EDUCATION, AND  
BRITISH UNIVERSITIES

On the basis of the Asquith Commission *Report* (Cmd. 6647) and the Irvine Committee *Report* (Cmd. 6654), the government decided in 1945 to foster the development of six new universities and university colleges in the following colonies: Nigeria, East Africa, Jamaica, Malaya, and two colonies now independent—the Gold Coast (Ghana) and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan (the Sudan). Toward this goal, the sum of £4,500,000 was allocated through the Colonial Development and Welfare Funds, and a Colonial University Grants Advisory Committee was established to administer the funds.

British universities were affected by this activity, as an Inter-University Council for Higher Education in the Colonies was created and each home university was asked to send representatives. The University of London was particularly involved, because all the colonial institutions except the University of Malaya were university colleges which entered into a special relationship with the London external-degree program.

THE UNIVERSITIES AND STATE REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

As a consequence of a successful wartime experience with eleven regional Civil Defence Commissioners, who were to exercise the powers of government in their areas if national communications broke down, the government adopted regional patterns for many of its postwar activities. Of such regional patterns, the structures proposed in the cases of the National Health Service, the teacher-training program, and the technical college system had the greatest bearing on the work of the universities.

Armytage writes regarding the Health Service:

Perhaps the most startling extension of the diocesan responsibility of the universities was inaugurated in 1948 by the National Health Act. . . . Fourteen Regional Hospital Boards were created on which the universities were not only represented but were exhorted to play their part in encouraging postgraduate study. That the universities should have an intimate knowledge of the hospitals within their region was still further ensured by the Medical Act of 1950 which demanded that all medical students should hold a house appointment at a hospital approved by the university of a particular region before they could be registered.<sup>4</sup>

Although the McNair Committee on teacher training was forced, by

<sup>4</sup> Armytage, *op. cit.*, p. 305.

internal disagreement, to offer two alternative plans for coördinating university policy with teacher-training programs, all English universities but Cambridge had by 1957 adopted the plan proposing an Institute of Education by which the university assumes general responsibility in its area for teacher-training standards, postgraduate instruction, and related research. Undergraduate instruction is, of course, usually provided by the separate teacher-training colleges.

After the publication in 1944 of the Percy Committee's report on higher technological education, the Ministry of Education divided England and Wales (Scotland is not under this jurisdiction) into ten areas, and established in each a Regional Advisory Council for Further Education and also a Regional Academic Board. The latter was composed of teaching representatives of the universities and technical colleges of the region. A National Advisory Council of Education for Industry and Commerce was also created in 1947, with members drawn mainly from the regional councils and academic boards. The purpose of this whole mechanism was to advise the Minister of Education on the development of technological education in the technical colleges and on its coördination with that in the universities. A joint committee of the National Advisory Council and the Grants Committee was formed to provide liaison between these two bodies.

#### UNIVERSITIES AND THE GROWING PROBLEM OF TECHNICAL STUDIES

The real dimensions of the problem of technical education were so formidable, however, that the regional machinery described in the preceding paragraph was not adequate to cope with it; for, as many observers have since noted, the task of providing an adequate number of well-trained technologists in Britain was, in effect, one requiring basic social and cultural changes, with important overtones relating to the proper place of technological studies in the universities and the educational status of higher technical colleges.

Gradually the breadth of the problem came to be realized, as successive reports of government committees cried for more and more applied scientists, as the "dollar gap" continued to yawn menacingly, and as British survey teams returned from the United States and Soviet Russia with ominous warnings of even more rigorous industrial competition just ahead. Thus, whereas technical education was originally thought to be predominantly the concern of the Minister of Education and his national and regional advisory councils, it has now become a completely national challenge, and everyone from the Prime Minister to the most sheltered classics don seems to have an opinion on the subject.



The emergence of technology as a national problem is an interesting and complex story, but only the major outlines of it can be sketched here.<sup>9</sup> Commenting on the recommendations of the Percy and Barlow Committees for the training of a much larger number of applied scientists, the Advisory Council on Scientific Policy pointed out that a major obstacle to achieving this goal was the "long-standing prejudice in favor of a career in the pure sciences as against the applied sciences," and urged: "it is important that this prejudice, which does not exist in other countries, should be removed."<sup>10</sup>

Most universities, of course, already had one or more faculties of technology, but students in the technological departments numbered only 12.2 per cent of the total British student enrollment in 1951-52, in contrast to 43.1 per cent enrolled in the arts.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, most academicians outside the technology faculties were not anxious to see that proportion greatly altered.

Therefore, when the continued national economic crisis pressed home the stark necessity of increasing British productivity, debate intensified over the best means of acquiring more technicians to apply the fruits of pure research. There were four major schools of thought on the subject. Some bodies of opinion, including the Association of University Teachers and the Association of Scientific Workers, favored emphasis on the rapid expansion of technology within the existing universities.<sup>12</sup> Others—sharing points of view represented by those of R. A. Butler, Lord Cherwell, and the *Times Educational Supplement*—argued for the establishment of an independent technical university, along the lines of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.<sup>13</sup> The signers of the Percy Committee's majority report, and certain other influential persons, belonged to a third school of thought: they recommended that, after standards at advanced colleges of technology had approached those of the universities, the degree of Bachelor of Technology should be established and awarded to properly qualified students.<sup>14</sup> Finally, there were those of the Percy Committee minority who felt

<sup>9</sup> An analysis of its possible implications for university-state relations is to be found in chapter x, below.

<sup>10</sup> Advisory Council on Scientific Policy, *Second Annual Report* (1949).

<sup>11</sup> U.G.C., *Univ. Devel. 1947-1952*, p. 18.

<sup>12</sup> Association of University Teachers, "Report on the Place of Technology in the Universities," *Universities Review*, n.s., Vol. 23, No. 1 (September, 1950), pp. 86-92.

<sup>13</sup> Lord Cherwell et al., *The Case for a Technical University* (1950), reprinted from the *Times Educational Supplement*; R. A. Butler, "The Future of Technical Colleges," *Journal of Education*, 82 (1950), 534-535; *Times Educational Supplement*, November 17, 1950.

<sup>14</sup> Special Committee on Higher Technological Education, *Report* (1945), pars. 57-61; see also National Advisory Council on Education for Industry and Commerce, *The Future Development of Higher Technical Education* (1951).

that a new type of award (such as a diploma) should be created for graduates of technical colleges, in order not to confuse their more practical training with that of students preparing for university degrees.<sup>15</sup>

The U.G.C. issued in 1950 a *Note on Technology in the University*, in which the committee took no strong position on any of these issues, other than to remark that the respective roles of technical colleges and universities in technological education were not identical! (The report did, however, make other recommendations not relevant to this discussion.)

As the "Great Debate" continued in academic circles and in the columns of *The Times*, it became obvious that the question would have to be resolved by the government in the form of a political decision. The Labour Government postponed in 1951 the development of a new technical university, because of the strain that such an action would put on already overburdened national resources. The Conservatives, however, spurred by yet another committee report (the Zuckerman Committee study of scientific manpower) just after their accession to power in 1951,<sup>16</sup> grasped the nettle firmly and in 1952 made a series of decisions of vital importance. First, when R. A. Butler, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced the recurrent grant for the 1952-1957 quinquennium, he said that in making some allowance for university development he had in mind particularly the need for scientific and technological progress. Then, on June 11, 1952, the Lord President of the Council announced that the Government was not only going ahead with the idea of a technical university, but also was planning to raise a selected few technical colleges to the status of advanced centers of applied learning. The University Grants Committee, whose advice was sought on the best ways in which to develop the technical university, recommended, rather, strengthening the Imperial College of Science and Technology, a part of the University of London. This suggestion was made on the grounds that "the isolation of an institution confined to a narrow range of subject [would be] unfavourable to the highest attainment."<sup>17</sup>

The Government accepted this recommendation on January 29, 1953, and made plans to spend £15,000,000 in capital development on Imperial College. In addition, it proposed to make resources available for the further development of technological education in university in-

<sup>15</sup> Special Committee on Higher Technological Education, *op. cit.*, pars. 62-65 (minority report).

<sup>16</sup> The Zuckerman Committee on Scientific Manpower, *Report* (1952).

<sup>17</sup> U.G.C., *University Development, Interim Report on the Years 1952 to 1956* (1957), Cmnd. 79, p. 13. Cited hereafter in this chapter as U.G.C., *Univ. Devel.* 1952-1956.

stitutions in other parts of the country. By July, 1954, the universities and colleges throughout the country had been canvassed on this subject, their reactions had been evaluated by the U.G.C. Subcommittee on Technology, and, on the strength of the subsequent recommendations, the Government had announced that the universities in Glasgow, Manchester, Leeds, and Birmingham were to be the main centers of the proposed expansion of higher technological education. Other universities were to receive minor special support involving less expansion. A grant of £224,000 for these purposes was allocated in 1954-55, and within two years the sum had reached £570,000.<sup>18</sup>

The basic problem was not solved, however, by the mere provision of expanded technical facilities, for the universities found that, taken as a whole, they had more places for technologists than students came forward to fill. Most students preferred universities to technical colleges, and, once inside a university, the arts and the pure sciences to technology--the national balance-of-payments problem to the contrary notwithstanding! The U.G.C. commented on this situation:

How far the responsibility for this state of affairs rests with parents, or with teachers who advise boys on future careers, or with industry may be a matter of argument, but we are satisfied that it does not reflect university policy. . . . We have assumed, in putting forward our plans for further development, that in the course of the next few years the problem of recruiting technological students will have been solved.<sup>19</sup>

The inadequate results in the campaign to attract future technologists prompted a renewed interest in technical education early in the year 1956, and it once again became a major subject of parliamentary discussion and governmental policy. On January 18, 1956, the Prime Minister, Sir Anthony Eden, spoke of the world-wide scientific revolution:

The prizes will not go to the countries with the largest population. Those with the best systems of education will win. Science and technical skill give a dozen men the power to do as much as thousands did fifty years ago. Our scientists are doing brilliant work. But if we are to make full use of what we are learning, we shall need many more scientists, engineers and technicians. I am determined that this shortage shall be made good.<sup>20</sup>

Soon afterward, the Lord President of the Council and the Ministry of Labour jointly issued a White Paper, *Scientific and Engineering Manpower in Great Britain*, which called for another doubling of the

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>19</sup> U.G.C., *Univ. Devel. 1947-1952*, pp. 58-59.

<sup>20</sup> As quoted in Ministry of Education, *Technical Education* (1956), Cmd. 9703, p. 3.

number of university graduates in engineering and other fields of science by 1970.<sup>21</sup> A White Paper entitled *Technical Education* followed, carrying the announcement of a five-year £80,000,000 capital-development program for technical colleges in England, Scotland, and Wales. Also, it sanctioned the Hives Committee recommendation of a Diploma of Technology as the proper award for work "equivalent in standards to honours degree courses in a British university." This work was to be offered at twenty-four institutions chosen ultimately to become "advanced technical colleges." State scholarships were to be made available for use in courses leading to this Diploma of Technology.<sup>22</sup>

This White Paper was debated in the Commons on June 20, 1956, at which time Mr. Butler announced that plans were already made to expand the number of university students in technology by 60 per cent over the five years 1957-1962. In addition, the sum of £4,500,000 was being made available for university buildings, to be started in 1957.

Another significant event was the Privy Council's granting of a royal charter in 1955 to the Manchester College of Science and Technology. Until then, although the institution had maintained a limited affiliation with Manchester University (an arrangement under which the College had prepared some of its students for the University's degree in technology), it had been under the jurisdiction of the Manchester Local Authority. With the granting of a royal charter, it acquired a status even more independent than that envisaged for technical colleges in 1945 by the Ministry of Education, which had tried to persuade the local authorities that, "subject to the ultimate control in matters of finance and general policy of the providing authority, the college should enjoy such freedom as will enable the governing body to develop its work in such directions as prove desirable and to attract first-class teachers on its staff."<sup>23</sup>

Those who, for varying reasons, opposed what the pro-technology group regarded as essential changes in higher education bore the brunt of sharp criticism toward the end of 1956, when the national orgy of self-examination brought on by the Suez Affair, the increasing Russian competition in trade and technical-aid programs, and the lengthening queues of young Britons preparing to emigrate overseas, seemed to throw discredit on existing educational values.

Dr. Bronowski, Director of the Coal Research Establishment of the

<sup>21</sup> Lord President of the Council and Ministry of Labour and National Service, Committee on Scientific Manpower, *Scientific and Engineering Manpower in Great Britain* (1956), p. 16.

<sup>22</sup> Ministry of Education, *Technical Education* (as cited in n. 20, above).

<sup>23</sup> Ministry of Education, Circular 98 (April 10, 1946), as later quoted in *Times Educational Supplement*, July 11, 1952, p. 598.

National Coal Board, advanced the thought that the "battle of Suez was lost on the playing fields of Eton" and added that there was a profound work of conversion to be accomplished on the minds of the whole administrative and governmental layer of society, which regarded science as something alien to it.<sup>24</sup>

Lord Simon elaborated on this same theme when, in the House of Lords on November 22, 1956, he spoke of the need for training more graduate engineers and scientists. Pointing out the greater effort being devoted to scientific studies and research in the Soviet Union, Lord Simon said that the general opinion prevailing in British government circles that scientists and engineers should be on tap and not on top would have to be altered, in view of the successful Russian experience of putting them on top.<sup>25</sup>

In the 1956 Reith Lectures delivered on the BBC, Sir Edward Appleton, Vice-Chancellor of Edinburgh University, spoke on the topic "Science and the Nation," and lambasted those "academic extremists" who would deny technology or applied science any place in university curricula. He said that one of Britain's curious characteristics was that, while earning her living by trade and manufacture, Britain had many people who affected a certain disdain for the useful and the practical. Vestiges of this kind of attitude, Sir Edward said, were still present.

There were growing signs by the end of 1956 that the Government, whether moved by these criticisms or other stimuli, was planning to take further vigorous action. For example, on the day of Lord Simon's debate in the Lords, it was announced in both chambers that plans for the next ten years called for an increase in the number of university students by 22,000, of whom approximately two-thirds would be students in science and technology. Mr. Brooke, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, said: "It is certainly our intention to ensure that the universities and technical colleges will together be able to produce at least the number of qualified scientists and engineers which the committee on scientific manpower recently estimated to be needed over the period ten to fifteen years hence."<sup>26</sup>

Toward the attainment of this goal, the Chancellor authorized a doubling of the nonrecurrent grant for capital expansion from the figure of £4,800,000 in 1956-57 to that of £10,400,000 in 1957-58, and

<sup>24</sup> *Manchester Guardian*, January 3, 1957. For further criticisms of the failure of the so-called "public schools" to encourage boys with a scientific bent, see the Advisory Council on Scientific Policy, *Fifth Annual Report* (1952).

<sup>25</sup> *Parl. Deb. (Lords)*, 5th ser., Vol. 200 (November 21, 1956), col. 436. By "on top" Lord Simon meant, of course, not the posts of heads of state, but rather the directorships of the state planning apparatus and of state enterprises.

<sup>26</sup> *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, 5th ser., Vol. 560 (November 21, 1956), col. 1750.

a further increase to £12,000,000 in each of the two subsequent years. (All this was over and above the £15,000,000 long-term grant promised for building up Imperial College.)

Finally, the quinquennial grants for 1957-1962 were announced in Parliament on March 14, 1957. The recurrent grants were to rise from £30,600,000 in 1956-57 to £39,500,000 in 1961-62.<sup>27</sup> But more important to technology than the increased grants (for, after all, these had grown steadily since 1944) was the very clear statement made by the U.G.C. at this time on the place of technology within the university. Justifying its earlier (1952) recommendation to expand Imperial College rather than create an independent technical university, the Grants Committee deemed it "imperative" to keep applied science in the closest possible touch with the pure sciences, and added that it also attached importance to the technologists' close contact with the humanities, "many of whose disciplines are becoming increasingly recognized as a necessary part of the education of the technologist."<sup>28</sup>

In a passage that seems certain to be quoted in future discussions on the proper scope of the university, the Grants Committee advanced the following reasoning:

As a result of the recommendations of [a number of committees appointed by the government in recent years to consider the organisation of higher education in certain forms of applied science], extra-mural schools of medicine, dentistry, agriculture and veterinary science have been brought within existing universities. If these recommendations are right for the application of science to the practical problems of healing sickness and growing food, there is no reason why they should not be of equal validity for its application to the practical problems of industry.<sup>29</sup>

One can sense the various ways in which such a statement will be used to support positions relating not only to the status of technical studies, but probably also to teacher-training colleges and, as public opinion shifts, possibly to other types of studies.<sup>30</sup>

But it would seem that before enthusiasts of all the flora and fauna of learning come forward with proposals to make room for their particular subjects within university precincts, they must accept the fact that chances for their success are very slim unless they can argue *Realpolitik* on behalf of their cause. For cynics would point out that

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 566 (1956), col. 1310.

<sup>28</sup> U.G.C., *Univ. Devel. 1952-1956*, p. 13.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, Armytage's advocacy of associating the technical colleges in regional institutes under university supervision—along the lines of the teacher-training system; Armytage, *op. cit.*, pp. 306-308. See also Sir Ernest (now Lord) Simon, "The Number of University Students," *Political Quarterly*, 15 (1944), 293-294, for an early application of the U.G.C. reasoning (see text, above) to teacher training.

technical education has received its special treatment not because of the theoretical reasons quoted above, but owing to its intimate relation to Britain's status as an industrial and military power.

The *Times Educational Supplement* has noted in particularly cogent terms this intensified governmental emphasis on the role of education in society:

Education is no longer a waif, the neglected child that needs an aunt. Education is a weapon of war, the long, cold war of brains and political subtlety, the war that has to be won, the war that keeps us alive in the very waging. . . . For education, which for long had only idealists as its supporters, and one knows how much they count in politics, has become a necessary tool of the realists. It is something along with stocks and shares and the production belt which the hard-faced men realise is necessary to the survival of this nation. Education is seen as linked to the atomic energy program, to the jet engine and the computer; it is all mixed up with the balance of payments and design of the Argentine family car. Education is something that pays off. We compete in education as we once competed in dreadnoughts. "We want eight, and we won't wait," they sang about battleships in the music halls of 1909. Today the Government might well sing it about the Advanced Colleges of Technology.<sup>31</sup>

If the government attitude toward education is as positive as this statement would indicate, state involvement in English education has indeed become as complete as it can, short of nationalizing the universities. From having almost no contact with the instruction of its citizens before the nineteenth century, the state has now moved to a position in which it is necessarily interested in every facet of education from the primary school to the university. But although in the case of lower education state control has seemed natural, inevitable, and not at all incompatible with concepts of proper governmental jurisdiction, most people would agree that university education involves a different type of training, a kind that requires a rarefied atmosphere of intellectual freedom and a wide exemption from normal state standards of "utility." For these reasons, the high degree of state interest in and support of the British universities since the war has been viewed ambivalently: the liberating effects of generous national subsidies have been welcomed, but there has also been anxiety lest the universities become mere passive instruments for state use, and fear that such a use would not be beneficial to the true purposes of the universities. In succeeding chapters of this study I shall attempt to determine to what extent, in fact, such anxiety and fears have been justified.

<sup>31</sup> *Times Educational Supplement*, Editorial, March 15, 1957.





## PART TWO

# THE STATE AND UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY

*The history of university relations with the state described in preceding chapters has clearly demonstrated the gradual, but ultimately drastic, transformation of the state's role in university affairs. It will be the aim of Part Two to examine analytically the various constitutional, administrative, and political facets of the present university-state relationship, in order to assess the extent to which, if any, university autonomy has been affected by state actions.*

*A brief concluding chapter will attempt to relate these analytical conclusions to the broader questions raised in the Introduction, offering value judgments on the strengths and weaknesses of present British practices and conjecturing on their wider applicability to other democratic societies.*

## THE LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL STATUS OF THE UNIVERSITIES

WHEN, in the Introduction to this work, it was stated that the universities were "political animals," the expression was used figuratively to connote the multifarious ways in which state actions now impinge on university life. There is, however, a more literal sense in which the statement is also true, for (to state the obvious) universities, like other corporate entities in the body politic, must operate in a legal and constitutional frame of reference without which their ordered existence would be impossible.

A study published in 1910, called *The Law of the Universities*,<sup>1</sup> though now somewhat outdated, offers convincing evidence of the variety of legal and constitutional relations between the state and the universities. These have run the gamut from matters of major importance, such as charters of incorporation, visitorial powers, and royal and statutory commissions, to such lesser items as early statutes prohibiting tournaments, hounds, dice, chess, hunting at night, dancing in the college, and so forth.<sup>2</sup>

### THE LAW OF CORPORATIONS

There is no definition of a university in English statutes and reports, but "the legal concept signifies a body incorporated for the purposes of learning, and possessing endowments and privileges."<sup>3</sup> Corporate status has been acquired by universities and university colleges in several fashions: by common law, papal bull, royal charter, and, directly or indirectly, by act of Parliament.

Oxford and Cambridge Universities, along with their earliest constituent colleges, were founded so far back in time that their first known charters or letters patent merely recognized them as preëxisting common-law corporations. Various royal charters from the thirteenth century onwards confirmed or enlarged their privileges—for example, the Oxford Charter of 1523 issued at the instance of Cardinal Wolsey, and the 1603 Charter in which James I conferred representation in the Commons on the universities.

<sup>1</sup> James Williams, *The Law of the Universities* (1910).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9-11.

<sup>3</sup> W. A. Robson, "Las universidades británicas y el estado," *Nuestro Tiempo*, Vol. 3, No. 22 (1956), p. 3. (A copy of the original English version is in the writer's possession.)

As for papal bulls, the Universities of Glasgow, Aberdeen, and St. Andrews were all chartered by such instruments in the fifteenth century; and Oxford was granted extended privileges by the Legatine Ordinance of 1214.<sup>1</sup> However, with the Reformation, the Pope's jurisdiction over British universities ceased and canon law no longer operated with respect to them.

Later colleges at Oxford and Cambridge received royal charters as they were founded, in the course of succeeding centuries. This remained true even after the Glorious Revolution and the rise of parliamentary sovereignty, for the Crown's power to grant charters was part of the royal prerogative which survived the constitutional changes of 1689.

In the nineteenth century, a slightly different procedure was observed on some occasions. Since a royal charter, though generally desired for reasons of prestige, was legally necessary only if university degrees were to be given, the founders of several modest colleges merely incorporated their institutions as nonprofit associations under the general statutes for civil corporations laid down by Parliament. This more simple process enabled them to enjoy corporate rights to hold property, to sue and be sued, and so forth, and at the same time to prepare their students for the external degree of the University of London.

When an institution of this type had passed through the status of university college and finally felt itself qualified to become a university with the power to award its own degrees, it was then required to petition the Crown-in-Council for a royal charter. The charter, granted by the sovereign on the advice of the Privy Council, not only created a new legal corporation and conferred upon it the power to grant degrees, but also laid down its general constitution and purposes. Soon thereafter a local act of Parliament would be passed, vesting in the new university the property and liabilities of the institution it replaced and making other necessary provisions. This process was used for Reading University (1926), Nottingham University (1948), Southampton University (1952), Hull University (1953), and Exeter University (1955).

The "advice" of the Privy Council is by no means *pro forma*; after the petition is received, the Queen by an Order-in-Council appoints an *ad hoc* committee to investigate the request. This Order is printed in the official *Gazette* and lies before Parliament for thirty days, during which time parties opposing the granting of a charter to the institution in question may object. No cloak of anonymity shields the objectors,

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 12.

for their complaints are forwarded directly to the petitioners for reply.

There then follows a "decision in principle." If the response is negative, the Queen issues an Order-in-Council rejecting the petition; no reasons are supplied, as the royal prerogative cannot be questioned. If, however, the decision is affirmative, negotiations commence between the investigating committee and the petitioners over the details of the draft charter. During this stage of the procedure, the *ad hoc* committee consults unofficially with the other bodies concerned: the University Grants Committee, the Home Office, the Treasury, Welsh and Scottish officials, and those Royal Societies which have dealings with universities. The government law officers, if needed, are consulted on legal issues (both the Clerk and the Deputy Clerk of the Privy Council in 1957 were men with legal training), and in any case are asked to approve the final draft of the charter.

If, usually after about nine months' time, agreement is reached between the committee and the petitioners,<sup>5</sup> the committee reports favorably, and the Queen issues another Order-in-Council, approving the report and the draft charter accompanying it and ordering the Home Secretary to prepare a formal charter for the Great Seal. (There is a tidy charge of £72 13s. 6d. for administrative costs!)

A university or college, once incorporated (in the case of colleges, whether by royal charter or otherwise), enjoys a high degree of autonomy, being subject only to the general law relating to corporations and charitable trusts, to the doctrine of *ultra vires* if it does not conform to the requirements of its founding instrument, and to any acts

<sup>5</sup> Agreement between the committee and the petitioners is usually, but not always, reached. Personnel at the Privy Council are naturally reluctant to discuss criteria of acceptability in the domain of the prerogative, as the essence of the prerogative is privacy and adaptability. (The Clerk of the Privy Council gave as the reason for there being so little satisfactory literature on the Privy Council this very indefinability of the prerogative. For an example of the vague type of descriptions of Privy Council procedures, see Sir Almeric Fitzroy, *The History of the Privy Council* [1928], pp. 308-310.) It is known, however, that some discontent exists over the fact that the Privy Council is unable, because of statutory limitations, to extend to *all* universities and petitioners for royal charters the permission granted by law to Oxford and Cambridge Universities in 1943 to invest their trust funds in nontrustee securities and also to unify their trust funds. (See, for example, University of London, *Report by the Principal*, 1955-56, p. 20.) Particularly in the present inflationary period in Britain, institutions already incorporated under parliamentary statute are unhappy to be asked to abandon some of their existing freedom of investment in exchange for the prestige of a royal charter. Some years ago the Nathan Committee on Charitable Trusts recommended greater freedom in financial management of charitable trusts, but the Government response—presumably based to a considerable degree on Privy Council advice—was not very favorable. The Privy Council position seems to be that the present restrictions are necessary in order to avoid the devaluation of royal charters which might result from careless financial management of chartered institutions. This argument would be more impressive, however, were there not already the exceptions of Oxford and Cambridge.

which Parliament may pass specifically regarding it." In addition, the universities, and those colleges which operate under royal charter, have two further legal obligations: to receive the Visitor or Visitors' stipulated by their charters—usually the monarch—and to submit any changes in their statutes to the Queen-in-Council or to a committee of the Privy Council for approval.

The Crown formerly played a more decisive role in university life.<sup>6</sup> In *The Law of the Universities*, chapters devoted to university administration, discipline, education, finance, privilege, and the courts are filled with examples of Crown-inspired legislation dealing with the minutiae of university life. But within the last two or three centuries Parliament has become the source of most political interventions in university affairs. Part One of this study indicates that with the rise of parliamentary sovereignty and cabinet government, the legislative interferences become less frequent and (to make a value judgment) more constructive. For example, the religious restrictions which early Kings-in-Parliament had imposed on the universities were removed by nineteenth-century legislation. The constitutions of many universities and colleges were legislatively reformed in the course of the last century and a half—either directly, by statute, as in the case of the Scottish universities, or indirectly, by the creation of statutory commissions with wide powers of reform, as in the case of Cambridge, Oxford, Durham, London, and Wales Universities. More recently Parliament has legislated on the conditions under which Oxford and Cambridge could administer their trust funds. But sporadic parliamentary interventions such as these have lessened during the past half-century with the emergence of the University Grants Committee as a continuing means of coördinating governmental policy toward the universities. Most observers agree that under this system, as it has evolved since

<sup>6</sup> *Halsbury's Laws of England*, Simond's edition (1955; cited below as *Halsbury's Laws*), XIII, 708; Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 18. However, Sir David Hughes Parry, Professor of Law at the University of London, maintains that universities chartered by the Crown are necessarily "total legal persons" and therefore not subject to the doctrine of *ultra vires*, which is applicable only to limited corporations created under statute law. The recourse for persons aggrieved by improper actions of chartered universities, Sir David says, is to seek redress through the Privy Council. This body can, if necessary, threaten revocation of the charter.

<sup>7</sup> The subject of visitations is discussed below.

<sup>8</sup> Before the Glorious Revolution "the Crown influenced the universities, besides [granting] charters, by positive direction [for example, pushing favorites for university and college offices, suggesting people for honorary degrees], dispensation from and suspension of existing law, and visitation directly or by delegation." Since the limitations placed by the Bill of Rights in 1689 on the sovereign's powers of dispensation and suspension related only to the Crown's role vis-à-vis legislation and not the prerogative, the monarchs retained these powers regarding university and college charters issued under the prerogative. Williams, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-26.

1919, the universities enjoy a large measure of autonomy; in the remaining chapters I shall attempt to indicate just how much.

However, it should be made clear that, legally, the universities cannot place their claims to freedom above the power of parliamentary sovereignty, for

...no subject whatever, and no institution whatever, can be placed outside the responsibility of the Cabinet and Parliament; if the law confers independence, it has to be seen whether the law ought not to be altered; and if an independent authority has abused its powers, it may be that its powers may have to be diminished or its composition be altered in order that its powers may not be abused."

#### UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE VISITORS

Concerning the question of Visitors, there is a legal distinction between universities, which are regarded as civil corporations, and colleges (at least those at Oxford and Cambridge), which are defined as eleemosynary corporations.<sup>10</sup> The former may, but do not necessarily, have Visitors. The latter, in the few instances in which their charters do not name someone else as Visitor, have the Crown acting through the Lord Chancellor as Visitor under common law.

According to the terms of their royal charters, all the modern universities have Visitors (usually, the Crown acting through the Lord President of the Council), but Oxford and Cambridge are now judged not to have any.<sup>11</sup> In earlier centuries, the two ancient universities were, of course, overrun with "visits" by various ecclesiastical and political figures, and letters patent from the Crown confirmed their legality. But by 1723, in one of the cases before the courts, "a *mandamus* was issued to the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge, because the university made no [report] of a visitor."<sup>12</sup> And although the Oxford Commission *Report* of 1852 included in its Appendices (Appendix D, p. 54) the testimony of several eminent men who considered the Crown to be the Visitor of Oxford, such an opinion was not upheld by the Crown's law officers. The 1957 university calendars (catalogues) of Oxford and Cambridge made no mention of Visitors.

The question of Visitors is of more than theoretical importance, because their powers are surprisingly broad: "... the supervision of the visitor is supreme as to all matters of internal arrangement, and in so far as he acts in accordance with rules and ordinances established and

<sup>10</sup> Sir Ivor Jennings, *Cabinet Government* (1951), p. 83.

<sup>11</sup> Eleemosynary corporations are those "for the perpetual distribution of the free alms or bounty of the founder to such persons as he has directed." *Halsbury's Laws*, IV, 5.

<sup>12</sup> *Halsbury's Laws*, XIII, 709; and Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

<sup>13</sup> Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

in force, he excludes the jurisdiction of the courts. . . . his decision [is] not examinable either at law or in equity."<sup>13</sup> In fact, one Noble Lord is quoted as saying that visitation "is a despotism uncontrolled and without appeal, the only one of the kind existing in this kingdom."<sup>14</sup>

In actual practice, visitation is no such despotism; its modest but real duties include interpretation of the corporation's statutes, settling disputes between its members, and acting as a court of appeal on general questions of administration raised by a member or one claiming to be a member. The Visitor has no power to revoke gifts, change usages, divest of rights, or examine books.

A typical provision of a modern royal charter reserves to the Crown visitorial powers such as the following:

We, Our Heirs and Successors, shall be and remain the Visitor and Visitors of the University and in the exercise of the Visitorial Authority from time to time and in such manner as We or They shall think fit may inspect the University, its buildings, laboratories, and general work, equipment, and also the examination, teaching and other activities of the University *by such persons as may be appointed* [by the Crown] *in that behalf*. [Emphasis added.]

#### ROYAL COMMISSIONS

The italicized words in the foregoing excerpt seem to bear out the opinion, expressed in some quarters, that "the State which charters the Universities may also 'visit' them, and [that] these visits take the form of 'royal commissions' of enquiry."<sup>15</sup> However, on the basis of the controversy (to be described below) concerning the legality of the Oxford and Cambridge Royal Commissions of 1850, it would seem that, whether or not the monarch is the Visitor of a particular university, the Crown may, by simple virtue of its prerogative, appoint a commission of enquiry.<sup>16</sup>

People within Oxford and Cambridge who were hostile to the Royal Commissions of 1850 argued that since these universities had no Visitors, the Commissions, appointed without parliamentary approval, were illegal. Basing their logic on Sir Edward Coke's dicta concerning earlier royal commissions, they contended that the royal prerogative could not by itself authorize commissions which operated outside the historic protection of jury trial or the doctrine of the law of the land.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> D. Brice, *A Treatise on the Doctrine of Ultra Vires* (1877), pp. 218-219.

<sup>14</sup> As quoted in Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

<sup>15</sup> Sir Ernest Barker, *British Universities* (rev. ed., 1949), p. 15; Robson, *op. cit.*, p. 4; and Sir Walter Moberly, *The Crisis in the University* (1949), p. 226.

<sup>16</sup> H. M. Clokie and J. W. Robinson, *Royal Commissions of Inquiry* (1937), pp. 81-86.

<sup>17</sup> Oxford University Commission, *Report of the Commissioners* (1852), Appendix, p. 25.

But the law officers of the Crown could see nothing in common between the illegal commissions of earlier centuries, which had attempted unauthorized taxation, punishment, and criminal enquiry, and the 1850 Commissions, which were authorized merely to investigate some public questions relating to higher education. It was true that such commissions of enquiry often led to administrative or statutory commissions with wide powers to act, "but in every such example this transformation from enquiry to administration was instituted and authorized by statutory provision."<sup>18</sup>

Since commissions appointed by simple virtue of the Crown's prerogative could not compel the attendance of witnesses, the Oxford Commission's sole authority (and also that of the Cambridge Commission) had to be "derived from the respect with which it may be expected that a Royal Commission will be treated by Her Majesty's subjects, more especially by public bodies and constituted authorities."<sup>19</sup>

Later royal commissions on Oxford and Cambridge and other universities received both more "respect" and more "authority"; for example, the Royal Commissions on Oxford and Cambridge in 1872 were given not only parliamentary sanction to send for persons and papers, but also the universities' advance assurance of coöperation. Thus it has now become generally true that: "... royal commissions are only appointed if there is already a strong demand in favour of their appointment within a University; and the statutory commissions are not only largely composed of members of the University concerned, but also consult the authorities of the University in framing any scheme of reform."<sup>20</sup>

#### ROYAL CONTROL OF SOME UNIVERSITY APPOINTMENTS

The Crown established "Regius Chairs" of Divinity at Oxford in 1496 and at Cambridge in 1502, and of Civil Law, Physic, Hebrew, Greek, and again Divinity at Oxford in 1535 and at Cambridge in 1540. The Crown continues to make appointments to these chairs, as it does to three out of the four principalships in Scotland. However, the noncontroversial character of these appointments is affirmed by Sir Walter Moberly, who notes: "... these [appointments] seem to be rather relics of earlier activities of the Crown as 'pious founder' than to be due to any general principle. . . . In practice the Crown has long exercised this

<sup>18</sup> Clotie and Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

<sup>19</sup> Oxford University Commission, *op. cit.*, p. 8. As noted in an earlier chapter, the language of the royal appointment of the commission included the usual phraseology about the power to send for persons and papers, but this was said to be merely a traditional formality.

<sup>20</sup> Barker, *op. cit.*, p. 15.



responsibility with a good deal of regard for university opinion and a scrupulous abstention from political bias."<sup>21</sup>

#### GOVERNMENTAL PRIVILEGES CONFERRED ON UNIVERSITIES

Privileges accorded to universities by the state are based partly on immemorial usage, partly on charters and statutes confirming rights exercised by virtue of papal bull or tradition, and partly on statutes conferring new privileges. "Most of them are what may be termed negative—that is to say, they are in the nature of exemptions from the law attaching in similar matters elsewhere."<sup>22</sup>

Chief among the numerous exemptions of this type are those freeing the Vice-Chancellors' Courts at Oxford and Cambridge from ordinary judicial jurisdiction; the universities' limited exemption from the disability under which most other corporations lie to take gifts in mortmain; and the exemption of the universities from the operations of the Charity Commissioners.

On the other hand, there have also been positive privileges awarded: for example, the libraries of Oxford and Cambridge were given, by a law of 1842, the right to demand a free copy of every book or edition published in the United Kingdom. Also, James I granted representation in the House of Commons to Oxford and Cambridge in 1603, and this practice was extended to the modern universities in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but was terminated entirely in 1948.<sup>23</sup>

#### STATE GRANTS TO THE UNIVERSITIES

Questions have been raised over the fact that the expanding grants to universities distributed by the University Grants Committee rest on no statutory authority other than the Vote of the Estimates.<sup>24</sup> Sir Ivor Jennings, troubled by the expenditure of public funds without statutory authority, has commented: "... there is even some doubt about its legality, though it has never been challenged in the courts."<sup>25</sup> The exchanges on this subject—and on many others—which have taken place, since World War II, between the Treasury and the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

<sup>21</sup> Moberly, *op. cit.*, p. 227.

<sup>22</sup> Williams, *op. cit.*, pp. 76–77.

<sup>23</sup> Since this question of university representation in the House of Commons did not directly affect the development of internal university policy, it has not been given further consideration in this work.

<sup>24</sup> This issue is examined in the next chapter. The Ministry of Education and the various local authorities do have statutory authorization to make grants under certain conditions to universities and university colleges, by virtue of the Education Act of 1944: 7 and 8 Geo. 6, c. 31, secs. 82, 84, and 100.

<sup>25</sup> Sir Ivor Jennings, *Parliament* (1940), pp. 285–286.

## PARLIAMENT AND THE UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMITTEE: THE ACCOUNTABILITY OF PUBLIC FUNDS

THE House of Commons' control of state taxation and supply (the British equivalent of American "appropriations") has been one of the major factors in the rise of responsible government in Britain. Although the emergence of relatively disciplined party politics has lessened the Commons' earlier importance in deciding questions of state policy, it has not at all diminished the lower chamber's role in checking on the legality and economy of public expenditure. For, once a cabinet has determined on a course of action and the majority party has duly translated this plan into legislation, it is in the interest of all parties to devise the most efficient and economic procedures possible for its implementation. It is in connection with this function that the question of parliamentary supervision of university grants has arisen.

The Commons, as a corporate body, has established the Select Committee on Public Accounts (P.A.C.) and the Select Committee on Estimates (S.C.E.) to aid Parliament in the supervision of the expenditure of public funds. These two committees overlap somewhat in their activities, but in general may be differentiated along the following lines: the P.A.C., dating back to 1861, operates primarily as a check on the legality of expenditures already made; it works as a single unit, guided by the postaudit findings of the Comptroller and Auditor General. The Estimates Committee, which has had an intermittent existence since its initial forebear in 1912, investigates the efficiency and economy of activities receiving funds in the Annual Estimates; it breaks up into several subcommittees and its members act essentially as lay critics with no professional assistance (such as that rendered to the P.A.C. by the Comptroller). In practice, the differing emphases of these two committees on "legality" and "economy" become blurred, for the P.A.C. has increasingly tended to judge the propriety of certain expenditures which for purely legal purposes are *intra vires*.<sup>1</sup> Both committees are precluded by their terms of reference from considering questions of policy.

Because of the Treasury's key role in the administration of public funds, both committees pay a great deal of attention to the working of

<sup>1</sup> For a detailed analysis of the work of the two committees, see Basil Chubb, *The Control of Public Expenditure* (1952).

"Treasury control." For example, the P.A.C. early in its long history claimed the right "... not only to examine and report, but to interpret and judge points of constitutional law and, further, to have its judgments respected. And it was here, particularly, that it checked its ally, the Treasury, just as it would any other department."<sup>2</sup> However, as the word "ally" in this quotation indicates, the normal relations between the Treasury and the P.A.C. (and later, after its establishment, the S.C.E. as well) have been those of close coöperation in the common pursuit of regularized and efficient government service.<sup>3</sup> The Treasury acts promptly on the reports of both committees, replying, in the case of P.A.C., with official Minutes on all the various problems raised, and in the case of the S.C.E., responding on all issues that specifically concern the Treasury. In these replies, which are incorporated in a later report of the committee concerned, the Treasury will undertake to implement the suggested change or, more exceptionally, will present a case for maintaining existing practice. The committee in question may, however, persist in its recommendations and the issue usually continues until one or the other of the parties agrees to yield.

It is against this background of essential harmony that the disagreement between the Treasury and these two parliamentary committees about the University Grants Committee must be viewed. What began in 1947 as an exchange of views on the question of statutory authorization for the U.G.C., in later years turned into a series of requests for more information about the Grants Committee's Estimates, for the right of access by the Comptroller and Auditor General to university records relating to nonrecurrent grants, and finally, for the same right regarding the U.G.C.'s records. However, although some difference of opinion still remains after ten years of "dialectics," many points of contention have been eliminated, with the help of concessions from both sides. On all issues but the very last one cited above, the parliamentary committees have either obtained satisfaction or abandoned their recommendations.

#### THE QUESTION OF STATUTORY AUTHORIZATION

The Public Accounts Committee has taken a special interest in the canon of parliamentary practice which stipulates that express statutory authority should be provided for any continuing activity involving substantial charges on public funds. According to this interpretation, a Vote of money is not of itself sufficient authorization, for, "strictly

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>3</sup> "In general, the three—the Treasury, the Comptroller and the Public Accounts Committee—work together with little friction." Samuel Beer, *Treasury Control* (1956), p. 62.

speaking, the Appropriation Act grants and appropriates money for a service [but] does not say that the service may be provided.”

In a series of exchanges in 1932, 1933, and 1937, the P.A.C. and the Treasury agreed that this canon should be made the general rule, but that there were also “certain recognized exceptions to it.” The P.A.C. repeatedly cautioned, however, that the number of such exceptions was too large.<sup>5</sup>

In its 1946–47 reports, the P.A.C. returned to this question, expressing the hope that “with reversion to peacetime procedure, every endeavour [would] be made, as opportunity occurs, to obtain specific statutory authority for continuing services involving substantial expenditure.”<sup>6</sup> The large police grants were among those cited as not being accompanied by statutory authorization.

The Treasury, in reply, confirmed the general principle of separate statutory authority and accepted the P.A.C.’s views on most of the outstanding cases, including that of the police grants, but contended that the National Savings Committee, the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (D.S.I.R.), and the U.G.C. constituted legitimate exceptions to the rule. Treasury criteria for exemption concerned either the amount of funds involved or the particular nature of the activity aided: it was “sometimes a matter how big the baby is, sometimes how odd it is.”<sup>7</sup>

The P.A.C. of 1948 seemed indifferent, however, to the “oddity” of the three babies for whom the Treasury pleaded, and stressed instead the huge increases in their grants. Pointing out that between 1932 and 1948 the annual Savings grant rose from £100,000 to £1,100,000, that of the D.S.I.R. from £500,000 to £3,300,000, and that of the U.G.C. from £1,700,000 to £12,000,000, the P.A.C. called for statutory authority for all three types of grants. Such legislation, it maintained, would give Parliament

... the opportunity of reviewing the need for the continuance of this expenditure on the present scale and of determining whether the administrative organisation, which was established at a time when the expenditure was on a limited scale and without any assurance of continuance, is equally well-adapted for the control and disbursement of the continuing and very substantial expenditure now involved.<sup>8</sup>

The Treasury indicated a readiness to give statutory authority to the

<sup>5</sup> Sir Ivor Jennings, *Parliament* (1940), p. 285.

<sup>6</sup> Public Accounts Committee (hereafter cited as P.A.C.) 1931–32, *Second Report*, H.C. 93; P.A.C. 1932–33, *Second Report*, H.C. 132.

<sup>7</sup> P.A.C. 1946–47, *Third Report*, H.C. 122, par. 14.

<sup>8</sup> P.A.C. 1947–48, *Second Report*, H.C. 199, Minutes of Evidence (hereafter called Min. of Evi.), Question (hereafter called Q.) 4215.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pars. 16–17.

D.S.I.R. "at the first convenient opportunity" and pointed out that as regards the National Savings Committee, which as a nonpartisan activity should be kept out of politics, most of the expenses were for staff and could therefore be shown in the Treasury's own Estimates. But it felt there were "strong reasons" against putting the universities' grants under statutory authority, one being that this "would involve difficulties affecting the academic freedom of Universities. . . . It had never been the policy of any government that the universities should be subject to statutory regulations or that academic policy should be controlled by the state." The Treasury argued that there would be little advantage in a short bill merely converting the present U.G.C. into a statutory body, and that it was difficult to see what the contents of a longer bill would be, because "academic standards, on the maintenance of which any grants must be based, were hardly susceptible of statutory definition," and because "no formula could be devised which would automatically measure the extent of assistance needed."

In his testimony before the Public Accounts Committee, Sir Edward Bridges, Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, pointed out that a statute embodying fixed grant limits would be undesirable, because, if the limits were set too high, it would encourage maximum spending on the part of the universities, and if too low, it would require that further legislation be fitted into an already crowded legislative calendar. Sir Edward did not press the argument that Parliament in its corporate capacity was not necessarily the most competent body to fix such limits; rather, he paid a form of lip service to the theory of continuing parliamentary control of financial policy:

. . . [Mr. Thurtle of the P.A.C.]. [Do] the Treasury Chiefs feel that, Parliament having given them no guidance (i.e. no fixed limits) at all as to the amount which the country can afford to spend on this kind of thing, they are in a position to assess that?

[Sir Edward Bridges]. All we are in a position to do is to approve grants which are put forward in Estimates and which Parliament in its wisdom may or may not approve."

So far as I know, Parliament "in its wisdom" has never, in recent history, refused to approve any of the Estimates, whether for university grants or other expenditures."

Most members of the P.A.C. apparently realized that statutory limits on grants to expanding institutions like the universities were inappro-

" P.A.C. 1948-49, *Third Report*, H.C. 233, pars. 1-3.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evl., Q. 258.

<sup>11</sup> "Estimates cannot be effectively criticized in Parliament since once the Government has presented them, it cannot without loss of face withdraw or alter them as a result of Parliamentary pressures." Beer, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

priate, and, even more important, they admitted being "impressed by the arguments advanced by the Treasury in favour of continuing the present system of administration without enabling legislation . . ." The P.A.C., therefore, in 1949 abandoned its recommendation "in the circumstances [then] prevailing."<sup>12</sup>

When the Estimates Committee made its study of university grants in 1952, its only mention of this issue was to recognize that "there are certain non-Governmental bodies which derive the main part of their finances from Government sources and which yet should be allowed, in the public interest, to retain the maximum degree of independence."<sup>13</sup>

The issue has, therefore, seemingly been resolved. However, one spokesman for the universities has commented to me: "One cannot be positive of this, because no Parliament or Parliamentary committee can ever bind its successors." While this is true in constitutional theory, the P.A.C.'s reliance on precedents, as demonstrated in its *Epitome* reports modeled on case law,<sup>14</sup> indicates that any reopening of this topic is most unlikely.

#### REQUESTS FOR MORE INFORMATION ON UNIVERSITY GRANTS

Although the Public Accounts Committee and the Select Committee on Estimates agreed that statutory authority would not be required for the University Grants Committee, neither parliamentary committee was satisfied with the type of information available concerning the Estimates for the university grants. The P.A.C. stated in 1949:

Your Committee would like to see introduced more effective means of securing parliamentary control over this large expenditure of public money . . . They hope that the Treasury will consider whether without impairing the independence of the Universities any further means can be adopted to inform Parliament more precisely how the grant-in-aid proposed in the Estimate is to be spent and to assure Parliament that grants made to the Universities are wisely used.<sup>15</sup>

Since the Treasury reply to this statement seemed to stress only the technical difficulties in the way of presenting more exact information, the P.A.C. in 1950 "felt it necessary to pursue . . . the question"—especially in view of the need for a more thorough examination of the next quinquennial Estimates for the period 1952–1957. The Accounts Committee, while insisting that it did not seek detailed Treasury control,

<sup>12</sup> P.A.C. 1948–49, *op. cit.*, par. 4.

<sup>13</sup> Select Committee on Estimates (hereafter cited as S.C.E.) 1951–52, *Fifth Report*, H.C. 163, par. 27.

<sup>14</sup> P.A.C. 1937–38, *Epitome of the Reports from the Committee on Public Accounts, 1857–1937*, H.C. 154; P.A.C. 1950–51, *Epitome of the Reports from the Committee on Public Accounts, 1938–1950*, H.C. 155.

<sup>15</sup> P.A.C. 1948–49, *op. cit.*, par. 4.

nevertheless felt that Parliament was "entitled to expect assurances, based on some broad examination of the Universities' financial arrangements, that the grants [were] administered with due regard to economy."<sup>16</sup> The information currently being supplied did not, in the view of the P.A.C., enable Parliament to form an opinion on the subject.

A statement in the Treasury Minute of February 27, 1950, had done nothing to lessen the P.A.C.'s anxiety in this regard. The Treasury had admitted that, because of the very independent status of the U.G.C., no one at the Treasury was "in a position to assure the Committee that the Grants are used wisely and that there is no extravagance or waste." The Treasury *believed* that there was little waste, but they could not absolutely *guarantee* it, having denied themselves access to U.G.C. and university records. When questioned by the P.A.C. about this statement, Sir Wilfred Eady of the Treasury acknowledged that he was "really . . . unhappy at having had to put that . . . sentence in," and added, "My colleagues . . . who deal with this are no more satisfied with this . . . than I." But at that moment he could foresee no new type of information "which would help the P.A.C. or Parliament to judge."<sup>17</sup>

Then, in what one commentator has called "an extraordinary lapse into personal opinion,"<sup>18</sup> Sir Wilfred offered the following reassurance:

These large sums were voted in 1948 in the financial exuberance which was possible then. . . . I imagine that the Chancellor of the Exchequer . . . will want to go into very considerable detail by way of review [of the next quinquennial grants] and pick up some of the suggestions and stories that are bruited about, about extravagance and the embarrassment to Universities of having too much money.<sup>19</sup>

Evidently the Treasury's subsequent careful scrutiny of the new quinquennial Estimates revealed no very serious extravagance, for Sir Edward Bridges testified before the P.A.C. in the following year that "only in exceptional cases would the departmental Treasury seek to disturb the balance of the recommendations put up by the U.G.C. as a whole. If I may say so, I am sure the enquiries made by the U.G.C. are extremely thorough, very careful and painstaking and carried out with a full sense of responsibility."<sup>20</sup>

But Captain Waterhouse of the P.A.C. felt that such a Treasury attitude invited waste; the idea that the U.G.C. never put forward any-

<sup>16</sup> P.A.C. 1949-50, *Fourth Report*, H.C. 138, par. 40.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 312.

<sup>18</sup> H. V. Wiseman, "Parliament and the University Grants Committee," *Public Administration*, 34 (1956), p. 79.

<sup>19</sup> P.A.C. 1949-50, *op. cit.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 312. For the reference to university "embarrassment," see the opinion of the Oxford vice-chancellor quoted earlier (p. 79, above).

<sup>20</sup> P.A.C. 1950-51, *Fourth Report*, H.C. 241, Min. of Evi., Q. 7095.

thing but a bare minimum of its requirements was outside his powers of belief: "Anybody who is an enthusiast about something nearly always puts up a figure and thinks, 'We will try this.' What I should like to be certain of was that the try-on has never succeeded, their having got a good deal more than they thought they might have got."<sup>21</sup>

Sir Edward replied that the universities valued their independence so much that they did their utmost to see that the system did in fact work well and economically. He had argued earlier that the adoption by the Treasury of a "defence in depth" system would merely encourage the universities and perhaps even the Grants Committee to submit bloated budget requests in the expectation that these would be heavily reduced at each stage of the more severe review process. He much preferred the system of giving them the direct responsibility for submitting requests limited to the absolute essentials.<sup>22</sup>

The P.A.C. was sufficiently satisfied on this matter to press it no further, but did renew its requests for more complete information on the Estimates.

As a result the Treasury undertook to recast the annual volume of U.G.C. statistics so as to make comparisons with those of the previous years more intelligible. In addition, a brief interim report on the first four years of the quinquennium 1947-1952 was published in 1952 (Cmd. 8473), to aid the Treasury and Parliament in evaluating requests for the next five-year period. (The regular and more complete quinquennial report was issued the following year: Cmd. 8875).

Although the S.C.E. welcomed these steps, and the further one of including in future Estimates the details of nonrecurrent grants, in 1952 it still felt that "a more precise statement" of the reasons for increasing the recurrent grant was desirable. The Estimates Committee claimed to have been "handicapped by not being aware of the basis of the new quinquennial program," and criticized the U.G.C. for its delay in publishing the expenditures made in preceding years. Acknowledging that the Treasury had said that "the last thing they wanted was to give an impression that they were anxious to hide anything, and that, in their view, independence did not imply secrecy," the S.C.E. recommended that the fullest possible information should be supplied to Parliament, preferably in the Estimates, whenever changes, either as a result of the quinquennial review or at other times, were made in the amount of recurrent grants. This information should show the reasons for such changes and the bases on which they were calculated.<sup>23</sup> It was

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 7108.

<sup>22</sup> P.A.C. 1948-49, *op. cit.*, Min. of Evi., Qs. 249-250.

<sup>23</sup> S.C.E. 1951-52, *op. cit.*, par. 35.



also recommended that a note should be inserted in each year's Estimates reconciling the amount of the quinquennial grant proposed for the academic year with the total figure of recurrent grant shown in the Estimates for the financial year."<sup>19</sup>

Having made these suggestions (and a more controversial one which will be discussed just below), the S.C.E. commended the U.G.C. on its general operations and stated that "the continued existence of the University Grants Committee seems to be the best solution to the problem of maintaining control."<sup>20</sup> The P.A.C., in one of its 1951-52 reports, agreed with the S.C.E. that "subject to the provision of certain further information in the Estimates, current arrangements for control are a reasonable compromise between the general desire to maintain the independence of the Universities and the need for the exercise of proper financial control both by the U.G.C. and by Parliament."<sup>21</sup>

The Treasury accepted the two S.C.E. recommendations concerning the supply of more comprehensive information,<sup>22</sup> and agreement was thus reached on another divisive issue, this time by virtue of the readiness of the Treasury and the U.G.C. to accommodate their actions to the recommendations of the parliamentary committees. In 1957, in order to facilitate the review of new quinquennial university Estimates, the U.G.C. again published an interim report on university development in the first four years of the quinquennium then ending (Cmd. 79).

#### THE QUESTION OF ACCESS BY THE COMPTROLLER TO UNIVERSITY

##### RECORDS RELATING TO NONRECURRENT CAPITAL GRANTS

The Estimates Committee's controversial recommendation mentioned just above related to closer governmental control of nonrecurrent grants to the universities. Noting a 1951 exchange between the Public Accounts Committee and the Treasury in which the latter agreed to the general principle that the books and accounts of bodies receiving the greater part of their income from public funds should normally be open to inspection by the Comptroller,<sup>23</sup> the Estimates Committee therefore recommend[ed] that this practice should be extended to cover all money issued by way of non recurrent grants to the Universities for capital development. . . . It [did] not appear to them that it would in any way encroach on the freedom of the Universities since this money is voted annually for specific purposes.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pars. 48-49.

<sup>21</sup> P.A.C. 1951-52, *Third Report*, H.C. 253, par. 39.

<sup>22</sup> S.C.E. 1951-52, *Eleventh Report*, H.C. 289, p. 20.

<sup>23</sup> P.A.C. 1950-51, *Fourth Report*, H.C. 241; and Treasury Minute of November 29, 1951.

<sup>24</sup> S.C.E. 1951-52, *Fifth Report*, H.C. 163, par. 37.

The P.A.C. took up this suggestion in one of its 1951-52 reports, agreeing that no "objectionable infringement of university autonomy would be introduced were the control [of nonrecurrent grants] extended . . ."<sup>30</sup> The relevant university records" should be open to inspection by the Comptroller, because "the present system of controlling these grants, which stops short at an examination of plans and estimates, is less than Parliament is entitled to, or accustomed to expect, where such appreciable amounts of voted monies are involved." (The nonrecurrent grants had amounted to £7,300,000 in the academic year 1950-51.)

Once again Treasury officials urged that the practices surrounding university grants should constitute a legitimate exception to a principle otherwise enjoying general Treasury approval. In this instance they argued, first, that existing procedures offered sufficient safeguards against waste; and, second, that the Comptroller's inspection of university records with an eye to "due economy" would inevitably impinge on questions of academic policy, which by definition were excluded from government control. If evidence of the universities' correct application of nonrecurrent grants was desired, this information could be found in their own auditors' reports.<sup>32</sup>

But the P.A.C., "after careful consideration, remain[ed] unconvinced by the Treasury arguments . . .," and renewed its suggestion that the Comptroller be allowed to inspect. The Accounts Committee pointed out that since the Treasury and U.G.C. were not aware of the instructions issued by the universities to their auditors, the two former bodies could not say whether the auditors regarded it as part of their responsibility (as would the Comptroller) to see that the grants were properly and economically applied to the specific purposes for which they were voted. Since the adequacy of the system of financial control clearly concerned Parliament, the Accounts Committee felt constrained to state that on the basis of the information available, it could not give Parliament an unqualified assurance that there was "no irregularity or abuse . . ."<sup>33</sup> The P.A.C. also wondered "whether the general attitude of the Treasury, on the advice of the U.G.C., towards applications for capital grants by universities [might] not be too generous."<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> P.A.C. 1951-52, *op. cit.*, par. 41.

<sup>31</sup> Hereafter, for the purpose of brevity, reference will usually be made only to "access to records," but the qualifying phrase, "which relate to nonrecurrent capital grants," should always be understood.

<sup>32</sup> Treasury Minute of November 18, 1952.

<sup>33</sup> P.A.C. 1952-53, *Third Report*, H.C. 203, pars. 1-4.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pars. 5-9. Cited in evidence of this contention was a Treasury agreement

The Treasury and the universities were not, however, without their defenders in this issue, for such august journals as *The Times*, *The Observer*, the *Manchester Guardian*, and *The Economist* carried articles in justification of the universities' independence. *The Times*, for example, called the P.A.C. proposal to bring in the Comptroller "the thin end of the wedge," which might upset the existing "admirably but delicately balanced relationship" between the state and the universities. "The special trust placed in the Universities is a natural incitement to those who watch over the public purse. They find a closed door and they would have it open. But it is a public interest that it should remain shut."<sup>66</sup>

This statement occasioned a reply from the chairman of the P.A.C., Mr. George Benson (Labour), who insisted in a letter to *The Times* that policy was in no way involved in the Comptroller's audit—"not even the necessity for, or desirability of, [a] building in question." It was merely a matter of judging, as was done with government buildings, whether the methods of contracting and of recording and controlling expenditure were reasonably designed and properly applied to ensure effective safeguards against waste and extravagance or other abuse.<sup>67</sup> This position had received implicit support in another letter to *The Times*, this one from G. C. Duggan, former Comptroller in Northern Ireland, who pointed out that ever since 1908 the accounts of Queen's University had been open to the Parliament in Belfast, but that no interference had resulted. Duggan added that the audit was neither a "wedge" nor a "hammer," but merely the "comptroller's tools."<sup>68</sup>

However, the Treasury, in its reply, resisted the P.A.C. proposal on the grounds that, if the Comptroller were given access to university records, the Treasury would "... before long find themselves compelled to expand their intervention in university matters and to enlarge their own control in a way which would certainly change, and they believe[d] would be prejudicial to, the present harmonious relationship between the universities and the University Grants Committee."<sup>69</sup> The

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with the University of London whereby: (1) the University was given a loan of £1,000,000, interest free, towards the purchase of property needed for expansion; (2) the loan would become a grant if the property purchased therewith was used as intended; and (3) the University was allowed to garner the interim income from the property before it was converted for use, in order to recoup with 3 per cent interest its own contribution of £350,000 to the purchase cost.

<sup>66</sup> *The Times*, August 6, 1953, p. 7.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, August 13, 1953, p. 7. But contrast this statement of intentions with what actually occurred in practice: see n. 54, below.

<sup>68</sup> *The Times*, August 11, 1953, p. 7.

<sup>69</sup> Treasury Minute of December 15, 1953.

Treasury then announced its intention of discussing with the universities the appointment by the U.G.C. of a small committee to study university administrative procedures relating to capital development. (Subsequently, a committee of four was appointed for this purpose and was under the chairmanship of Sir George Gater—the Gater Committee.)

The P.A.C., in one of its reports in 1954, indicated skepticism concerning the Treasury's proposition and promised to revive the discussion after the Gater Committee had reported. In the interim, it advanced a proposal which opened up a new area of disagreement.

#### THE QUESTION OF ACCESS BY THE COMPTROLLER TO THE RECORDS OF THE UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMITTEE

Noting that neither the Treasury nor the Comptroller had access to the records of the University Grants Committee, the Public Accounts Committee urged in 1954 that the Comptroller be allowed to inspect those documents; this procedure, the P.A.C. reasoned, would ensure "due economy" in the expenditure of nonrecurrent grants without necessitating "any contact with the Universities."<sup>39</sup>

On this occasion, *The Times* was moved to speak of "the thick end of the wedge," pointing out that such a step would threaten the independent status of the U.G.C. and make it difficult to recruit the best men to serve as members.<sup>40</sup> The Treasury in reply to the P.A.C. stated that its proposal could not be dissociated from the larger question of access to the university accounts themselves, and expressed the hope that the P.A.C. would not press its new point until the Gater Committee had reported.<sup>41</sup>

The Gater Committee submitted its findings to the U.G.C. in January, 1956, and the Grants Committee subsequently published the report, with a few minor qualifications, in its own name. The investigation had indicated that there was "no evidence in the universities of a lack of appreciation of the need for economy," but the Gater Committee nevertheless felt "bound to stress the risk that 90 to 100% [of the total cost] grants-in-aid from public funds may weaken the sense of financial responsibility."<sup>42</sup> The U.G.C. passed on this report to the universities, stating that it was "of great importance that the universities should in future comply with the [Gater] recommendations . . . as qualified [by

<sup>39</sup> P.A.C. 1953-54, *Third Report*, H.C. 231, pars. 31-32.

<sup>40</sup> *The Times*, September 8, 1954, p. 7.

<sup>41</sup> Treasury Minute of January 31, 1955.

<sup>42</sup> U.G.C., *Methods Used by Universities of Contracting and of Recording and Controlling Expenditure* (1956), Cmd. 9, par. 29.

us].” The U.G.C. asked to be informed to what extent the universities were taking steps to conform to such recommendations.<sup>14</sup>

However, the P.A.C., though “welcoming the report of the Gater Committee and the steps which the U.G.C. [had] taken to ensure that its recommendations [were] complied with,” stated that the report did “nothing in itself to secure greater Parliamentary control over the expenditure of public money.”<sup>15</sup> One would have thought that parliamentary control was only a means to efficient expenditure of public funds; yet this statement and others which could be quoted lead one to believe that the P.A.C. sought parliamentary control as an end in itself. Indeed, a close analysis of the Minutes of Evidence of the 1955–56 Accounts Committee reveals a growing impatience with the Treasury position and a resort to coarser tactics and looser thinking than had earlier been employed.

For example, members of the Accounts Committee spoke of the U.G.C. as being “behind the Iron Curtain,”<sup>16</sup> of the “battle” being “once again joined [after the Gater report]”<sup>17</sup> and of “misappropriation of funds” in connection with perfectly legal, if politically debatable, transfers of funds by the U.G.C.<sup>18</sup>

In reference to this last issue, there were no less than four separate questions in which Sir Edward Hale, secretary of the U.G.C., was repeatedly asked to confirm that the U.G.C. Estimates were really “submitted in good faith.”<sup>19</sup> The P.A.C. was particularly bothered by the fact that the U.G.C., taking advantage of the informational rather than legal nature of the breakdown into detail of its Estimates, had transferred funds from proposed major to proposed minor works (when progress on the former was slower than had been expected).

This and other examples of alleged laxness, plus the Gater Committee warning on the “risks” of 90 to 100 per cent grants, led the members of the P.A.C. to state that they were “in no better position than their predecessors” to give assurances regarding the elimination of waste and extravagance, and that, moreover, they were “left in doubt whether the University Grants Committee are themselves in a position fully to satisfy themselves on these matters.”<sup>20</sup> The P.A.C. therefore “reiter-

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, Annex II, last par.

<sup>15</sup> P.A.C. 1955–56, *Sixth Report*, H.C. 348, par. 14.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 6293.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 6315.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 6399.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evi., Qs. 6404–6406 and 6427.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, par. 25. Evidently it is possible to displease a parliamentary committee by exercising too much as well as too little supervision of expenditure. The S.C.E., in a report on the Arts Council, several years earlier, had compared it to the U.G.C. and had stated: “It is [the Council’s] obvious duty to see that monies are well spent,

ate[d] most strongly" the 1953-54 recommendation to give the Comptroller access to the U.G.C. books and papers relating to nonrecurrent grants.<sup>60</sup>

At the same time, a P.A.C. report in 1956 reopened in a rather confusing manner the question of the suspended recommendation of an earlier Accounts Committee that *university* records relating to capital grants be made accessible to the Comptroller. The 1956 committee said, without making an explicit recommendation about it, that they took "the same view as their predecessors that proper Parliamentary control would involve" such an inspection of university records. They argued in justification that if the universities were "spending their grants wisely" they had "nothing to fear." And yet, according to the accompanying Minutes of Evidence, the chairman first was unable to remember that this recommendation had ever been made by an earlier Accounts Committee, and then, when it was specifically called to his attention that this was true, he spoke as though "that was dropped some considerable time ago."<sup>61</sup>

At this disclaimer (not, as we have seen, borne out by the *Report* itself), Sir Herbert Brittain of the Treasury stated that he was "very glad to hear that we have got so far." But when asked about the Treasury's attitude to the "compromise" of giving the Comptroller access only to U.G.C. records, he replied that, although he was "sorry to disappoint the Committee," "we do not like that very much more than the other suggestion . . ."<sup>62</sup> Sir Herbert advanced three reasons for this continued opposition by the Treasury: (1) giving the Comptroller access to the U.G.C. records would force the Treasury to assume the same power, involving thereby much duplication of work already done by the U.G.C.; (2) it was probable that, to obtain all the information that he would need, the Comptroller would have to look beyond the U.G.C. records to those of the universities; and (3), since the U.G.C. records contained details of both financial accounting and policy decisions, the Comptroller would inevitably be placed in a position to interfere, however inadvertently, with educational policy.

Regarding the first of these arguments, the P.A.C. pointed out in rebuttal that the Comptroller and Auditor General already had access, in a way in which the Treasury did not, to the books and accounts of other government departments, but that this situation had not forced

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but the high proportion of overheads [nearly 18 per cent] seems to indicate that perhaps this duty is being given too much emphasis." S.C.E. 1948-49, *Nineteenth Report*, H.C. 315, p. xv.

<sup>60</sup> P.A.C. 1955-56, *op. cit.*, para. 24-25.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evi., Qs. 6322-6327. Actually, of course, the recommendation had merely been left hanging in 1953-54, pending the report of the Gater Committee.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evi., Qs. 6324 and 6326.

the Treasury to seek similar powers of inspection in regard to these departments. Furthermore, the Accounts Committee maintained, even if the Treasury official in charge of the U.G.C. Vote were to feel compelled to inform himself more intimately on U.G.C. matters, this was not necessarily to be regretted, for the P.A.C. found it "difficult to accept a position in which an Accounting Officer is able to disclaim knowledge of all details of an expenditure of over £6,000,000 for which he is responsible to Parliament."<sup>53</sup>

In connection with the second point made by Sir Herbert, the P.A.C. replied that if the Comptroller needed more information than that which was available from the U.G.C., he could merely request the latter body to obtain it from the universities.

On the third issue, the P.A.C. simply restated its belief that the Comptroller would not interfere with academic policy, but no amount of assurance from the P.A.C. could satisfy the Treasury, before the fact, that access by the Comptroller to U.G.C. records might not lead to the raising of questions touching on academic policy. Indeed, although the Treasury did not call attention to it, the fact that at that very hearing a member of the Accounts Committee raised a question about the justification for building new examination halls at Edinburgh University was a straw in the wind, indicating how far some members of the P.A.C. were already tempted to interfere.<sup>54</sup>

The Treasury strove mightily to make clear that its arguments were all based on the existing unique and delicate relationship between the government and the universities, and that it was a "matter of balance" whether, given the tightening up of university procedures recommended by the Gater Committee, "the chances of finding something which was really worth finding and airing... was worth the risk, as we think it, to the existing arrangements."<sup>55</sup>

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, par. 20.

<sup>54</sup> Mr. Hoy of the P.A.C. had said (*ibid.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 6304): "... this is the thing that disturbs this Committee, that I am told when these halls are completed at this considerable cost, they will stand empty for most of the year."

When Sir Edward Hale of the U.G.C. replied that the halls were used for other purposes as well, Hoy continued: "My information is that they are not and there is considerable perturbation about it. All I am suggesting is that this Committee should be assured—I am not saying this hall in particular—that this... Government money which is being spent has been put to the best possible use; and that is the complaint of this Committee" (Q. 6305).

In spite of the fact that it is obviously a question of academic policy whether examination halls are more necessary to Edinburgh University than other proposed buildings, no one from either the P.A.C. or the Treasury challenged Mr. Hoy's statements. Even the chairman, (now Sir) George Benson, made no protest, although Hoy's contentions directly contradicted his (Benson's) earlier disclaimer to *The Times* (quoted above, p. 126) that policy would be "in no way involved, not even the necessity for, or desirability of, the building in question."

<sup>55</sup> P.A.C. 1955-56, *op. cit.*, Min. of Evi., Qs. 6390, 6472, and 6473.

The P.A.C. was unable to appreciate this Treasury concern with "risks": "It is this vagueness, this no line of demarcation between fact and fear, that has prolonged this discussion."<sup>50</sup> The Accounts Committee could claim to base its recommendation that the Comptroller be given the right to inspect U.G.C. records on two solid "facts" that were not at all vague. First, "apparently, from the questions which have been put this afternoon, the Members of [this Public Accounts] Committee . . . feel that the university [nonrecurrent] grants are all haywire."<sup>51</sup> Second, the P.A.C. could not investigate this unsatisfactory situation properly without the guidance of the Comptroller; for "... [while] the U.G.C. may, apparently, *ex gratia* answer questions that are asked by this Committee, the whole examination is frustrated by the fact that without the advice of the Comptroller and Auditor General, we do not know what questions to ask."<sup>52</sup>

Sir Herbert chose not to deny the latter contention, but attempted to undermine its basis by replying to the former: "I would only like to assure you that *to the best of my knowledge*, it is not haywire, Sir."<sup>53</sup> Such a statement might, perhaps, have carried more weight with the P.A.C. had they not deduced from the Treasury official's testimony that he "disclaim[ed] knowledge of all details of an expenditure of over £6,000,000 for which he is responsible to Parliament."<sup>54</sup> The P.A.C. *Report* therefore again urged "most strongly" the recommendation that the Comptroller be allowed to inspect U.G.C. records.

Once again the leading newspapers sprang to the defense of the Treasury and the U.G.C. *The Times*, particularly incensed at the P.A.C.'s doubts about the U.G.C.'s being in a position "fully to satisfy themselves on these matters," commented:

This comes so near to a declaration of no confidence in the U.G.C. and their procedures that it is necessary to say unequivocally that this body of highly responsible

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evl., Q. 6390.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evl., Q. 6391.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evl., Q. 6314. The *ex gratia* answer referred to resulted from a continuation of Mr. Hoy's questioning, described above. Mr. Hoy wanted to know whether he was entitled to more information on the grants paid to Edinburgh University. He was told that if the question were put to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the House of Commons, this Minister would, with the advice of the U.G.C. and the Treasury, give the best answer he could. Not satisfied with this reply, Mr. Hoy pressed further: "Supposing I . . . were to ask the . . . U.G.C. [to] supply this information to me, would I get it?" Sir Edward Hale replied for the U.G.C.: "I think if I were asked to supply the Committee with it, I should supply it, yes." (*Ibid.*, Min. of Evl., Qs. 6305-6307.)

It seems to me that while the Treasury had been resisting most effectively the larger loss of independence which might result from the Comptroller's having access to U.G.C. records, this willingness to bypass the responsible minister might tend to lead more gradually to a similar eventuality. "Death by a thousand cuts" is slower but no less certain than that from the guillotine.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evl., Q. 6391 (emphasis added).

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, par. 20.



and experienced men and women have the confidence of everybody else. . . . [Parliament] must keep the implied contract there has always been that the Committee shall be in fact as well as in name a true watertight bulkhead between the State and the academic world.<sup>61</sup>

The Treasury Minute in reply seemed to reflect the rougher tactics of the P.A.C. While resolutely maintaining its rejection of what the *Manchester Guardian* had called the Accounts Committee's "favourite hobbyhorse," the Treasury announced a series of procedural revisions relating to nonrecurrent grants which went far in the direction desired by the P.A.C. In the first place, the Minute stated that the universities and university colleges had all agreed to notify their auditors of the nonrecurrent grants received and the purposes for which they were made, and to request these auditors to certify in general terms that every such grant was duly applied to its proper purpose.<sup>62</sup>

Second, the Treasury listed a whole new set of procedures according to which the U.G.C. would keep it more fully and more currently informed of the details of the capital-development programs, and would be required to seek prior Treasury approval for any substantial alterations (that is, changes of more than 10 per cent) in the proposed distribution of nonrecurrent grants.

Finally, the Treasury agreed to present the proposed major and minor capital-development programs as separate items in the Appropriation Account, thus requiring the U.G.C. to obtain Treasury permission for any *virement* between the two categories.

Explaining its continued rejection of the P.A.C.'s inspection proposal, the Treasury stressed again its opinion that the government's unique relationship with the universities called for special financial arrangements: "the question is the precise form which these unique arrangements should take."<sup>63</sup> The Treasury Minute concluded with the hope that "the Committee will agree that the existing practice, as now amended, gives a reasonable assurance that this expenditure will be properly controlled and properly administered."<sup>64</sup>

The P.A.C. seemed impressed with this series of actions taken by the Treasury and in one of its 1957 reports agreed to suspend judgment on the issue for three years while the new procedures were given a fair trial.<sup>65</sup>

There the matter rested— at least for the time being. In retrospect, one can see that what has happened has been a variation on a typical

<sup>61</sup> *The Times*, August 17, 1956, p. 9.

<sup>62</sup> Treasury Minute of January 31, 1957, p. 7.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> P.A.C. 1956–57, *Third Report*, H.C. 243, par. 11.

British theme, namely, the operation of forces to bring about substantial changes without causing any break in the outer fabric. In this instance, if, as seems likely to me, the P.A.C. ultimately accepts the latest Treasury position, the situation will be as follows: on the one hand, neither the universities' nor the U.G.C.'s records will be subject to inspection by the Comptroller, and the U.G.C. will continue to operate without a statutory basis; on the other hand, Parliament will, in contrast to its situation in the 1940's, find itself supplied more quickly with more complete information on the university grant Estimates. Moreover, the administrative procedures between the Treasury and the U.G.C., between the latter and the universities, and within the universities will have been tightened, especially with respect to nonrecurrent-grant procedures.

Thus, whether or not the P.A.C. foresaw such a result when it initiated its campaign, and whether or not the outcome could have been achieved by less strenuous means, the give-and-take which stemmed from the P.A.C.'s assumption of the role of "villain" has improved the safeguards on the expenditure of a sizable sum of public funds without doing mortal damage to the universities' freedom from direct state financial control.<sup>66</sup>

Of course, such a happy outcome is dependent on the discretion of all parties, in knowing when to yield and when to stand firm. If the P.A.C., for instance, were to decide to carry this controversy further, the next recourse would presumably be to bring it to the attention of the committee's parent body, the House of Commons. A university official expressed to me the fear that such a step might lower the quality of the discussion by changing its context from "technical" to "political." If the matter were taken up by the popular press, which has hitherto left coverage of the issue to the so-called "serious newspapers," he doubted whether it would want, or be able, to educate the man-in-the-street to an appreciation of the subtler arguments favoring academic autonomy.<sup>67</sup>

It is most unlikely, however, that the disagreement will reach the floor of the Commons in the form of a debate. In the first place, it is a foregone conclusion that, should the issue be pressed to a division, the Government would, if necessary, issue a three-line Whip to its party members to support the position taken by its Chancellor of the Exchequer. Moreover, many, if not most, of the Opposition would

<sup>66</sup> Chubb notes that even "where committee recommendations were rejected, the very definition of two opposing viewpoints has had some value in focusing attention and thought on the subject concerned." Chubb, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

<sup>67</sup> This problem is considered again in the last chapter.

doubtlessly refuse to support the P.A.C. against the universities. Second, although the P.A.C. and the S.C.E. are officially organs of the Commons, they address their reports primarily to the Government and its departments and are largely dependent for their success on the Government's willingness to adopt their recommendations. They are, therefore, naturally disinclined to risk antagonizing the Government by making their reports the basis for censure motions.<sup>68</sup> And, finally, there are the practical problems of a very crowded legislative calendar and the customary lack of interest in the reports of these two committees on the part of the great majority of Members of Parliament.<sup>69</sup> Proposals have been made to give these reports precedence on one or two Supply Days or on Adjournment Debates, but their lack of popularity has never yet enabled them to gain that status.

There is, of course, another and less contentious way in which the Commons can be made aware of the issues dealt with in the committee reports, and that is to raise them in Question Time. This has been done at least three times since 1954,<sup>70</sup> but in no case did it elicit anything more decisive than a confirmation of the essential Treasury position.

Although the universities seem for the time being to be relatively secure from the threat of direct parliamentary control of their financial affairs, there remains to be considered the less overt but more crucial danger that their general policies regarding curricula, faculty, students, research, and capital expansion may eventually be unduly influenced by government decision on national policy. The following chapter will deal with the circumstances surrounding this question.

<sup>68</sup> Chubb, *op. cit.*, p. 255; and A. H. Hanson, "The Select Committee on Estimates," *Yorkshire Bulletin of Economic and Social Research*, 3 (1951), 124-125.

<sup>69</sup> Hanson writes, "In general, a perusal of *Hansard* leaves the impression that members do not refer to the Reports as often as they might, nor use them with conspicuous intelligence." Hanson, *op. cit.*, p. 126. Though admittedly the judgment is based on a very small sample, I found the Members of Parliament and Noble Lords whom I interviewed to be in essential agreement that there is little interest in the committee reports.

<sup>70</sup> *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, 5th ser., Vol. 524 (1954), cols. 1001-1002; Vol. 529 (1954), cols. 104-105; Vol. 536 (1955), col. 135.

## NATIONAL POLICIES AND UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY

A COMPARISON of the current British university scene with that before World War II reveals striking changes which have taken place in respect to the sizes of student bodies, faculties, and university physical plants; the breadth of, and balance between, studies; and the quantity of basic and applied research programs. Whether or not the altered situation represents a desirable change, the state must be credited with having been responsible directly or indirectly for a large part of the transformation.

In this chapter, through an examination of the means by which national policies affecting the universities have been formulated and carried out, I shall attempt to define the character of the state's influence and to estimate the degree, if any, to which this influence has diminished the autonomy of the universities.

### THE FORMATION OF NATIONAL POLICIES AFFECTING THE UNIVERSITIES

National policies affecting the universities<sup>1</sup> are, of course, subject to the same principles of collective cabinet responsibility as other government measures. The three ministers most closely associated with policies touching on university life are the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to whom the University Grants Committee is responsible; the Minister of Education, who administers most of the state scholarship programs and has great influence over the conditions of local authority scholarships; and the Lord President of the Council, under whom operate the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, the Advisory Council on Scientific Policy, the National Institute for Research in Nuclear Science, and the Medical and Agricultural Research Councils. As was pointed out in chapter vi,<sup>2</sup> other departments such as the Ministry of Supply, the Colonial Office, and the Admiralty are from time to time also concerned with various aspects of university activities. In all probability, however, state policy on the universities occupies very little of the cabinet's precious time, for the widespread practice

<sup>1</sup> For purposes of brevity, the qualifying phrase "affecting the universities" is often omitted in the following pages, but the expression "national policies" in this chapter should always be understood to be in that context.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 93.

of interdepartmental consultation ordinarily achieves agreement on such questions at levels well below that of the cabinet.

Chief among the agencies involved in this subcabinet network of consultation and coördination is the University Grants Committee. Theoretically only a committee to advise the Treasury on the distribution of university grants, in practice the U.G.C. has become "in effect a small Department of Government in charge of the Universities."<sup>3</sup> Even though state scholarships and various research grants are administered by other agencies, the U.G.C. is the vital center for coördinating the formulation of state policies toward the universities. The U.G.C.'s great influence in forming policy has emerged out of its unique position as both the principal source of advice to the government on university opinion and the chief means of carrying out national policies once they are determined. This dual role was clearly outlined in 1946 in the committee's new terms of reference, which called for it "...to assist in consultation with the Universities and other bodies concerned the preparation and execution of such plans for the development of the Universities as may from time to time be required in order to ensure that they are fully adequate to national needs." (Cf. p. 58.)

Dr. A. E. Trueman, when deputy chairman of the U.G.C. in 1947, explained to the Select Committee on Estimates the methods by which the U.G.C. estimated these "national needs":

... we are getting information continuously from a whole series of bodies suggesting the needs for trained men in particular fields. We are in touch with all the Ministries who employ professional or graduate workers of various types; we have representatives of those Ministries attending our meetings [as Assessors, with right to speak but not to vote], so we are able in relation to medical men, dentists, agriculturists and so on, to get some understanding of what is the kind of outflow from the universities that ought to be provided. We are at present in contact with the Ministry of Labour, which is endeavouring to secure for us some information as to the probable needs in all kinds of science and other employment, and we are receiving continuously from the universities the numbers of their graduates in each particular specialisation, so that we can see how these things are going to match as time goes on.<sup>4</sup>

Asked whether this kind of coördination was limited to consideration of national manpower needs, Dr. Trueman answered, "No, it includes the provision of facilities for research in particular things, and anything indeed that can be interpreted as national needs." He said that the U.G.C. was continuously in touch with several government depart-

<sup>3</sup> Sir Hector Hetherington, *The British University System, 1914-1954*, Aberdeen University Studies, No. 133 (1954), p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> S.C.E. 1946-47, *Third Report*, H.C. 132, Min. of Edu., Q. 1950.

ments about decisions of top-level importance, both at the policy-making stage and, later, with regard to their detailed implementation.<sup>5</sup>

In forming its criteria for desirable state policies, the U.G.C. also, as its terms of reference direct, consults the universities, both individually, through quinquennial visits and numerous other less formal contacts, and collectively, through the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals. The Vice-Chancellors' Committee, as was shown in earlier chapters, has come to play a vital, if unobtrusive, role in presenting university opinion to the government. The U.G.C.'s relations with the universities are "friendly, informal and frequent," and discussions on possible developments are held "on a basis of co-operation in which it is perhaps rather difficult to say who does which."<sup>6</sup> "It is often difficult to say where an idea has emanated from because of the exchange of thought."<sup>7</sup>

However, when asked by the Select Committee on Estimates about the nature of their relationship with the U.G.C., representatives of the Vice-Chancellors' Committee replied, first, that they were consulted by the U.G.C. on "wide general questions" affecting them all, but not on "the broad question of financial policy so far as university education in the country as a whole is concerned"; and, second, that they preferred the relationship to remain the way it was:

We trust there is [a coordinated plan for university education as a whole] but it does not seem to us that we, as heads of separate institutions, each of us perhaps concerned with the special needs of his own place, are likely to be awfully good members of that [planning] committee.

.....

... the Grants Committee have been concerned, and perhaps we also have been concerned, to preserve our independence of one another ... Our contacts have been exceedingly friendly, but I doubt if either body would think it entirely right that we should be, both of us, parties to the making of a policy; that is their business, financial policy, and they are advising the Chancellor of the Exchequer.<sup>8</sup>

On this basis, then, the U.G.C., having drawn together the various strands of government policy, having taken into account the reports of specialized committees of enquiry,<sup>9</sup> and having consulted formally and informally with the universities, submits to the Chancellor of

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evi., Qs. 1951 and 1956.

<sup>6</sup> S.C.E. 1951-52. *Fifth Report*, H.C. 163, Min. of Evi., Q. 108.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 509.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evi., Qs. 361 and 363. (Sir Hector Hetherington.) Sir Hector later answered the question, "... you do not want anything altered, you are quite satisfied?" by explaining that the present relationship between the U.G.C. and the Vice-Chancellors' Committee had "taken a long time to build, ... is difficult to define and could easily be destroyed." *Ibid.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 365.

<sup>9</sup> These were described above, p. 72.

the Exchequer its yearly Estimate for capital expansion, its quinquennial requests for the grants required for university development during the next five-year period, and its advice as requested on the broad issues of university policy.

At this phase of policy development, the Treasury appears to hold the lightest possible rein over the U.G.C.—partly because of the general desirability of allowing any committee which deals with universities to remain as free as possible, and partly because the U.G.C. is itself regarded as “part of the Treasury.” A Treasury official commented: “Their job is to do our job . . . we do not put them through the same kind of grilling which we do the Ministry of Education. [The latter’s] Accounting Officer . . . is a most trustworthy colleague but . . . a servant of another Minister . . . out to fight his battle and we fight by the Queensbury rules if necessary.”<sup>10</sup>

Mr. Playfair of the Treasury admitted to the Select Committee on Estimates that there was a certain “danger” in allowing this freedom to the Grants Committee, but claimed that the risk was met “by having highly qualified staff with Treasury training who serve an extremely admirable Committee who always astonish me by their Treasury-mindedness.”<sup>11</sup>

Thus assured of a sympathetic hearing at the Treasury, the U.G.C. is able to submit its advice and requests for grants in essentially broad terms. Although it has some fairly definite policies in mind when recommending the new quinquennial Estimates to the Chancellor, the U.G.C. never breaks down its requests into proposed suballocations for individual universities.<sup>12</sup>

The Treasury undertakes to examine the U.G.C.’s general plan for recommended grants against the background of two objectives: first, finding out “what the [general] policy is and satisfying oneself that [it] has been carefully thought out”; and second, “so far as one can, weighing up the desirability of expenditure for that particular purpose and comparing it with expenditure upon other purposes.”<sup>13</sup> Here, one feels, is very nearly the heart of the process of determining the “national needs.” The Treasury staff, with its responsibility for co-

<sup>10</sup> S.C.E. 1951–52, *op. cit.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 24. (Mr. Playfair—aptly named, it would seem!)

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 25. H. V. Wiseman, noting this high praise, asks, “Is the U.G.C. in return astonished by the University-mindedness of the Treasury?” in “Parliament and the University Grants Committee,” *Public Administration*, 34 (1956), 84.

<sup>12</sup> S.C.E. 1951–52, *op. cit.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 24.

<sup>13</sup> Sir Edward (now Lord) Bridges, in P.A.C. 1948–49, *Third Report*, H.C. 233, Min. of Evi., Qs. 249–250.

ordinating national expenditure, must try "on a common sense judgment of things"<sup>14</sup> to balance the relative values of policies competing for limited public funds.

On the basis of Treasury testimony quoted earlier,<sup>15</sup> it seems that the U.G.C. Estimates not only are subjected to less detailed scrutiny than those of other agencies, but also emerge more nearly intact from the general competition for funds. Seen as a political decision in the most literal terms, the Chancellor's fixing of the total sums to be granted the universities during the succeeding quinquennium and his annual allotment of university capital grants are, in theory, subject to being opposed both by cabinet colleagues before official policy is announced, and, later, after it has been made public, by the Commons in debate. In practice, however, neither Parliament nor either major party has taken any great interest in university affairs,<sup>16</sup> and the Chancellor's decision, therefore, nearly always effectively commits the Government in power to the general policies proposed by the U.G.C.

As a result of this procedure, the U.G.C. usually receives, in the form of official state policy, the substance of its own earlier recommendations to the Chancellor. The Grants Committee also feels bound by the relevant policies of other government departments and by the recommendations of various special committees of enquiry, once these have been accepted as the official Government position; but, again, since the U.G.C. was probably consulted before these other policies and recommendations were adopted, it has no sense of being forced to accept "alien" policy. It is, in fact, often represented on the special committees of enquiry.

What are the actual national policies which have taken form since 1945 from the procedure just described? Viewed in the broadest perspective, state relations with the universities since World War II have been based on three primary objectives which have received the explicit or implicit support of both the Labour and the Conservative Governments.<sup>17</sup> Emerging out of the material and social conditions of the immediate postwar era, these goals can best be stated in terms of the situation which then existed. The first objective related to the

<sup>14</sup> Sir Edward Bridges, *Treasury Control* (1950), pp. 27-28.

<sup>15</sup> See Sir Edward Bridges' statement before the F.A.C., quoted above, p. 122.

<sup>16</sup> The role of parties and Parliament in this regard will be considered in the next chapter.

<sup>17</sup> The high degree of political consensus on state policy for universities owes a great deal to the common university background of leading figures in all parties. See Appendix VI. This factor is further considered in chapter x, "The Politics of University-State Relations."



urgent need to double the number of arts, science, and technology graduates by 1955 and later to redouble this number by 1970; the second, obviously harmonizing well with the first, concerned the state's wish to extend the opportunities of a higher education to a wider number and variety of students; and the third pertained to the state's determination not only to help maintain university standards in the face of this huge expansion, but even to improve on prewar conditions of teaching and research so that "better-trained" as well as "more" graduates would be produced, and particularly so that the nation's industrial and military research needs would be more fully met.

From these three general goals has been derived the justification for nearly all the major government policies affecting the universities since the war. The proposed increase in the number of students and in the volume of research entailed the recruitment of more faculty members and the initiation of huge building programs, embracing better laboratories, libraries, halls of residence, and so forth. Since faculty salaries and capital grants absorbed by far the greatest share of the extra national grants necessary to finance the universities' expansion, both these items were brought under closer state control. And finally, the gaps and weaknesses in several professional areas of higher learning revealed by special committee surveys led to two major recommendations: first, that the training in such areas, if not already totally within the universities, be made so as soon as possible; and second, that a system of temporary earmarked grants be instituted to ensure the rapid development of these fields.

#### THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL POLICY

In execution as well as in formulation of policy, the University Grants Committee has been the chief, but not the exclusive, government organ concerned. Its primacy in execution has been based both on the scope of its contacts with the universities and on the size of the grants which it distributes. For instance, not only does the U.G.C. interest itself in a wide spectrum of university planning, including matters that touch on curricula, faculty, students, and building programs, but in the representative year 1954-55 it furnished 70.4 per cent of the total university income in Great Britain.<sup>19</sup> In contrast, the universities are affected by other government agencies (principally the Ministry of Education and the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research) only so far as some of their scholarships, research

<sup>19</sup> U.G.C., *Returns from Universities and University Colleges, 1954-1955* (1956), Cmd. 9800, p. 41. See also Appendix IV of the present study.

grants, and occasionally provision for special science facilities are concerned. The combined contributions by way of such non-U.G.C. government money going to the universities in the form of grants and tuition fees of scholarship holders amounted in 1954-55 to less than 10 per cent of the university income.<sup>19</sup> Any examination of the influence of state policies on the universities must, therefore, begin with fairly detailed attention to the operations of the U.G.C.—its relationship with the Treasury, its administration of earmarked and block grants, its growing authority over university capital-development programs, and its role in the determination of faculty salaries—before turning to the other government departments and their impact on the universities through scholarship and research activities.

#### THE UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMITTEE AND THE TREASURY

The University Grants Committee, as noted earlier, operates with a very wide degree of discretion, being subject only to the general guidance of the Chancellor. When asked by a member of the Public Accounts Committee whether it would be “within the competence of the Treasury to make it a condition of the grants that they should democratise the universities more,” Sir Edward Bridges, then Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, replied: “One of the advantages of the present system and of there being no clear definition in statute is that all is left free, and the Treasury are not debarred from saying anything they like to the U.G.C. They could take any point of that kind if they thought fit.”<sup>20</sup>

In practice, however, the Chancellor usually “thinks fit” to interpret the Treasury’s relationship with the U.G.C. in much the same terms as do those ministers empowered to deal with the quasi-independent nationalized industries; namely, to issue only “directions of a general character as to the exercise and performance by the board of their functions in relation to matters appearing to the Minister to affect the national interest.”<sup>21</sup>

Sir Edward Hale, executive secretary to the University Grants Committee, indicated to the Select Committee on Estimates in 1951 that he would be “very surprised” if the U.G.C. ever got anything but a general directive from the Treasury. “The Treasury would never . . . tell us to give more or less to some particular university. They

<sup>19</sup> U.G.C., *op. cit.*, p. 41. Note: this percentage must be deduced, as the table in question gives no breakdown of the respective proportions of fees paid by the national government, the local authorities, and students.

<sup>20</sup> P.A.C. 1948-49, *op. cit.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 277.

<sup>21</sup> Coal Industry Nationalisation Act, 1946, Sec. 3 (1).

never have done so and it was the whole essence of the appointment of the U.G.C. that they should never do so."<sup>22</sup>

Confirming this interpretation, R. A. Butler, when Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1953, described his role as follows:

I have first to decide the total grants, after receiving the recommendations from the U.G.C. Secondly, I have to put to the universities, through the U.G.C., the government's request for particular developments. I can then stipulate that sums should be used for certain purposes, but this must be used very sparingly as a method; indeed, there are no such earmarked grants at present, but they might be a suitable mechanism for starting or accelerating a particular development. But—and this is the important thing—once the purposes for which the money should be spent have been settled, I do not interfere in its division between different universities.<sup>23</sup>

An example of the government's "request for particular developments" was afforded by Mr. Butler's announcement to the Commons of the quinquennial grants for the period 1952–1957: "...in making some provision for development, I have in mind particularly the need for scientific and technical progress, and I am sure the University Grants Committee will keep this in mind in distributing the grants."<sup>24</sup>

But, demonstrating just how "general" this type of guidance is, Sir Edward Hale, when asked by the S.C.E. whether the Chancellor in his statement quoted above meant mainly graduate or undergraduate development, replied, "I think he will leave that to the Committee and we shall have to do some thinking on the subject."<sup>25</sup>

It is quite possible, of course, that the Chancellor unofficially plays a more decisive role than the one which seems to be indicated by this evidence. Indeed, I was told (though I received some reports to the contrary from other sources) that the U.G.C.'s decision in 1947 to support the foundation of the University College at North Staffordshire in the face of open opposition from the Vice-Chancellors' Committee stemmed directly or indirectly from the personal intervention of Hugh Dalton, the Chancellor of the Exchequer at that time. According to this version, the plan for an experimental college<sup>26</sup> proposed by Lord Lindsay and the public officials of Stoke-on-Trent was considered too radical a departure from orthodox university tradition in Britain and would not have survived the opposition of influential

<sup>22</sup> S.C.E. 1951–52, *op. cit.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 288.

<sup>23</sup> R. A. Butler, in "Government and the Universities," in Seventh Congress of the Universities of the Commonwealth, *Report of the Proceedings* (1953), p. 30.

<sup>24</sup> *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, 5th ser., Vol. 496 (1952), cols. 51–53.

<sup>25</sup> S.C.E. 1951–52, *op. cit.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 597.

<sup>26</sup> A brief description of the experimental nature of the college at North Staffordshire was given above, p. 78.

university figures (whom the U.G.C. is usually anxious not to offend) had it not been for Dalton's action.

However, whether or not such an account is accurate, it seems clear that by and large neither the Chancellor nor the Treasury provides any real source of continuing control over the universities. It now remains to be seen whether the U.G.C., given this wide degree of flexibility, has succeeded in what it calls its "most important function," that of "reconciling the operation of planning with the maintenance of the essential academic freedoms."<sup>27</sup> It has been sustained in this task by its conviction that the contrasting principles are not "contradictory," and by the acceptance on the part of the Vice-Chancellors' Committee of the U.G.C.'s enhanced role.<sup>28</sup> To decide whether planning and freedom are in fact contradictory in the context of university-state relations, this work now turns to be a survey of specific U.G.C. operating procedures.

#### THE UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMITTEE AND UNIVERSITY EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

*Earmarked grants.*—From the time of its establishment in 1919 until 1945, the University Grants Committee distributed its grants to the universities in block sums, to be expended at the universities' discretion over the whole field of their activities. But after World War II, the U.G.C. reluctantly accepted the recommendations of a number of special committees of enquiry to initiate "as a temporary measure" a system of earmarked grants for special fields. These sums of money, unlike the block grants, were to be accounted for in detail to the U.G.C., and any unspent balances were to be surrendered to the U.G.C. at the end of the academic year. The system was held to be "almost inevitable when it [was] desired, for reasons of national policy, either to introduce new subjects of study or to secure rapid large-scale developments in departments already established."<sup>29</sup>

In point of fact, both of the objectives just cited were desired by the government: the Alness Committee *Report* and the two Loveday *Reports* (see p. 72) urged that higher agricultural and veterinary education be everywhere brought within the university system and strengthened; the Goodenough and Teviot *Reports* recommended similar developments for medical and dental education; the Scar-

<sup>27</sup> U.G.C., *University Development from 1935 to 1947* (1948), p. 81. Cited hereafter in this chapter as U.G.C., *Univ. Devel. 1935-1947*.

<sup>28</sup> See the Vice-Chancellors' Committee "Note on University Finance and Policy" cited above, note 19, p. 76.

<sup>29</sup> U.G.C., *Univ. Devel. 1935-1947*, p. 78.

brough and Clapham *Reports* advocated expansions in existing facilities and staff for teaching and research in Oriental, African, East European, and Slavic studies, and asked for improvements in social and economic research; and the influential Barlow *Report* made its sweeping recommendation for a doubling in ten years of the number of students in science, technology, and the arts.

As has been noted in chapter v, when the U.G.C. agreed to undertake the distribution of earmarked grants in these special fields, it appointed a parallel series of specialist subcommittees, composed partly of U.G.C. members and partly of coöpted outside experts. The following procedure then evolved for administering the programs: the U.G.C. would invite each university and college that might be in a position to take part in a suggested development to apply for additional grants for the purpose; the applications from those institutions which responded were then referred to the appropriate subcommittee, and the earmarked grants were distributed on the advice of this body. The special grants rose from an initial £1,000,000 for medical studies in 1945 to just over £5,000,000 in 1951-52. By the latter date they formed 30.7 per cent of the total recurrent grants.

The U.G.C. recognized the problem which the wide variety of invitations to undertake new activities brought to the universities:

These demands are generally quite uncoördinated, and a situation could easily arise in which the universities could only meet [them] by distorting the balance of [university] work and neglecting studies... which may really be of greater importance though lacking at that time the advocacy of those with particular interests. The balance of university activity which would be desirable in the long-term interests of the community as a whole will not necessarily or even probably be the same as that which would result from an uncritical acceptance of all such demands.<sup>30</sup>

The Grants Committee would not admit, however, that a proposal to a university to undertake expansion in a particular field under the auspices of an earmarked grant was any more dangerous to accept, or difficult to reject, than an earmarked endowment from a private benefactor:

Both involve, if accepted, an obligation on the part of the university affecting the use which may be made of a certain part of its income. If a university feels that the acceptance of a benefaction [whether public or private]... is likely to disturb the balance of its activities, its remedy is the simple one of refusing the benefaction.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> U.G.C., *University Development from 1947 to 1952* (1953), Cmd. 8875, pp. 13-14. Cited hereafter in this chapter as U.G.C., *Univ. Devel. 1947-1952*.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

This interpretation is not without its weaknesses, for, as an American observer, L. M. Hacker, pointed out, the public offer bears the full prestige and backing of the state and of the usually eminent committee which recommended it.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, there is a significant difference between the risk of antagonizing a private patron, however wealthy, and that of creating a bad impression in the minds of members of a committee continuously responsible for a large part of an institution's other recurrent and nonrecurrent income.<sup>33</sup> Although rejection of proffered earmarked grants is easily accomplished by merely advancing no proposals relating to the special field under consideration, Hacker was probably right in declaring that "it would be a bold group of university administrators indeed which would try to stop its ears to such manifestations of interest."

At a meeting with members of the Vice-Chancellors' Committee in 1952, the Select Committee on Estimates took up the question of the state's right to exert its influence and spend its money for the development of specific projects. Having first agreed with representatives of the Vice-Chancellors' Committee that earmarked grants should not be continued after a new development was on its own feet and ready to meet what Dr. Logan, Principal of the University of London, had just called the "healthy criticism and crossfire from other Faculties which is the essence of university self-government,"<sup>34</sup> Mr. Mulley of the S.C.E. asked: "But you would agree that, to put it very bluntly, if the Government wants certain developments in the university world which the university world on its own criterion would not be prepared to provide, the Government should then [earmark] that development?" Sir Maurice Bowra, then Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, answered that it would be necessary in such a case to "distinguish between a thing we would like to do if we could afford it and a thing we would not like to do at all."<sup>35</sup>

Sensing that there might be a discrepancy between the University's "likes" and the Government's wishes, Mr. Mulley pressed on: "But

<sup>32</sup> See H. W. Dodds, L. M. Hacker, and L. Rogers, *Government Assistance to Universities in Great Britain* (1952), p. 25. Dean Hacker uses the phrase, "the pressure of public opinion," but in my judgment, such an expression is too all inclusive. Only that small segment of the population which can be termed "readers of the serious press" are in fact aware of university affairs. Whether the public's concern is great or small, some universities have refused earmarked funds, saying in effect, "No, this takes us away from our general line of development and we would rather not do it." As related by Sir Hector Hetherington, S.C.E. 1951-52, *op. cit.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 422.

<sup>33</sup> For a revealing quotation of the U.G.C.'s strong bargaining position in this matter, see Sir Edward Hale's statement to the P.A.C., below, p. 151.

<sup>34</sup> S.C.E. 1951-52, *op. cit.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 398.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 417.

you would agree that there will be occasions when the university is not the best judge of the national interest, insofar as the university naturally would not be aware of the particular problems, for instance, that the Foreign Office may be finding in getting people with a particular knowledge?" Disarmed, perhaps, by the particular national problem offered as an example, Sir Maurice replied, "I quite agree with you. I think things that the Foreign Office may want, in a linguistic or geographic way, we should understand."<sup>36</sup>

It would have been interesting to have heard the university reply had Mr. Mulley chosen a less "likable" example (at least by Oxonian standards) than the needs of the Foreign Office. What, for instance, might Sir Maurice have replied if Mr. Mulley had selected, hypothetically, a desire on the part of the government to educate all secondary school teachers at universities? (And obviously, even more extreme examples than this could be cited.) Here lies the meeting point of the national interest, as determined by the state, and university autonomy, as interpreted by its faculties and administrators. (Nor is its relevance confined solely to the use of earmarked grants; for, as will be shown in the next section of this chapter, the state may also use block grants—albeit with less spectacular results—to influence educational policies.)

In 1951 Mr. Douglas Veale, Registrar at Oxford, analyzed in a magazine article the factors involved when persons or groups outside the universities, such as the state, claim "the power to decide an academic question on social grounds." For the layman, Veale wrote, the question of preserving a proper balance of studies seems simple: "How, he asks, is anyone to doubt that the study of atomic energy is more important than the history of ancient Egypt?" Whereas, according to Mr. Veale, most academicians subscribe to the view that they cannot discriminate between the academic importance of subjects. "No scholar would ever be bold enough to say that any subject is completely exhausted. Still less could anyone weigh the claims of active, expanding studies."<sup>37</sup>

Because of these marked differences in viewpoint between academic and nonacademic opinion, Veale concluded, "the tendency will, no doubt, be for government departments and other bodies to seek to impose upon universities more than they ought to undertake, and for

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Edu., Q. 418.

<sup>37</sup> Douglas Veale, "University Administration," *Fortnightly*, Vol. 170, No. 1019 (1951), p. 743. If this analysis is correct, it would seem that university administration is run on Newton's Law of Continuing Motion. But, of course, internal university politics does manage to alter the status quo occasionally—even at Oxford.

the universities in consequence to resist the pressure more than can perhaps be socially justified."

Examples of university resistance to earmarked grants can be seen in the statement of the Oxford Vice-Chancellor, quoted earlier,<sup>38</sup> concerning the "embarrassment" of being offered too much money for the social sciences, and in the doubts expressed by Sir James Mountford, Vice-Chancellor of Liverpool University, in regard to earmarked grants, based on reports of special committees. These, Mountford said, have meant that

... Universities have felt, in some instances, rather more impelled to undertake new functions than they would have been if they had been left entirely to their judgement on such matters. There are serious doubts in some University circles with regard to the wisdom of some of the recommendations of the Goodenough Committee, the Clapham Committee, and the Scarborough Committee.<sup>39</sup>

Not all academic opinion, however, was hostile to the intervention of the state in the form of earmarked grants. Sir Maurice Bowra, for example, later Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, commented on the Scarborough *Report* as follows:

No one can pretend that Oriental, Slavonic, East European and African studies have in the past received in this country the attention they deserve. They have been left to the individual enterprise of universities and have suffered both from the lack of coördination which is inevitable in such a system and from the changes in public taste which determine the quality and quantity of academic courses. It is now clear that for strong reasons of imperial and foreign affairs, this haphazard system should not be allowed to continue.<sup>40</sup>

A more extreme justification for national intervention came from Professor G. D. H. Cole, a prominent left-wing Socialist at Oxford, in his review of the Clapham Committee *Report*:

Hitherto, the U.G.C. in effect confined itself to responding passively to claims made upon it by the Universities... This negative attitude has been disastrous for the social studies... [which], being weakly represented in the councils of the universities, are in no position to push their claims, with the result that they are largely ignored in the applications brought before the U.G.C. by the pundits who profess to speak for university education as a whole... The U.G.C. [should] depart from its negative attitude and... accept some responsibility for making the universities do the right things, even where the reactionary elements largely at the head of them are strongly opposed.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>38</sup> See above, p. 79.

<sup>39</sup> Sir James Mountford, in "Relations of the State and the Universities," in Sixth Congress of the Universities of the Commonwealth, *Report of the Proceedings* (1948), pp. 17-18.

<sup>40</sup> Sir Maurice Bowra, "The Scarborough Report and the Universities," *Universities Quarterly*, 1 (1947), 377.

<sup>41</sup> G. D. H. Cole, "The Clapham Committee Report," *Universities Quarterly*, 1 (1946), 99-100. Some support, of unverified authenticity, is lent Professor Cole's



Notwithstanding such support as this for earmarked grants, the U.G.C. decided on balance—and with the added incentive of simplifying the very complicated bookkeeping involved—to recommend to the Treasury that earmarked grants be ended at the close of the quinquennium in 1952.

The Grants Committee could by that time be fairly certain that the universities, with tenured staff appointed, the flow of students accepted, and research under way, were sufficiently committed to the specially aided fields to preclude any significant cancellations. As an additional safeguard, however, the U.G.C. announced that it was ceasing the use of earmarked grants only on the assumption that the universities,

...in allocating their income among the various faculties and departments... [would] be prepared to treat the developments of the 1947–52 quinquennium in the special fields of study no less favourably than other departments; and... that any university which [might] propose to curtail any development initiated with the assistance of an earmarked grant [would] consult [the U.G.C.] before a final decision is taken.”

*The Times* hailed the abolition of earmarked grants as “the chief constitutional mark of the quinquennium”;<sup>42</sup> but a closer inspection of the block-grant procedures, to which a complete return was being made, would have indicated that the difference between the two methods of allocating state aid was only one of degree of control and not of kind.

*Block grants.*—Sir Frederick Ogilvie, the late Principal of Jesus College, Oxford, had pointed out publicly as early as 1948 that there was “some humbug” in distinguishing too sharply between earmarked and block grants: “Universities know quite well that if they use any part of their block grant for purposes which the U.G.C. has not

charges by statistics on the total expenditure on departmental maintenance in 1938–39, the last prewar year:

Faculty	Total departmental maintenance	Percentage
Arts (excluding Social Science) ...	£ 1,084,873	28.2
Pure Sciences	986,663	25.6
Medicine (including Dentistry)	885,064	23.0
Technology	553,224	13.9
Agriculture...	241,625	6.3
Social Science	115,909	3.0

Source: *Universities Quarterly*, 10 (1957), p. 230.

<sup>42</sup> U.G.C., *Univ. Devel. 1947–1952*, pp. 51–52.

<sup>43</sup> *The Times*, April 10, 1952.

approved, they cannot expect further support for them. The U.G.C. is paymaster and paymasters, like leopards, keep their spots."<sup>44</sup>

Variations of this same thought—that the formally unfettered block grant is in actuality a subtle means of exerting state influence on a wide range of university policy—were, between 1947 and 1952, expressed in more moderate language by public figures in the following varied circumstances: by Dr. Trueman, successively deputy chairman and chairman of the U.G.C., before both a 1947 and a 1952 Select Committee on Estimates;<sup>45</sup> by Sir Edward Hale, U.G.C. secretary, before both the 1952 Public Accounts Committee<sup>46</sup> and the 1952 Select Committee on Estimates;<sup>47</sup> and finally, by representatives of the Vice-Chancellors' Committee, before the 1952 Select Committee on Estimates.<sup>48</sup>

The most revealing of these statements about the control implicit in the awarding of block grants came from Dr. Trueman in 1947:

[Block grants] are not earmarked as regards particular things within the universities; that is to say, in making a grant to a particular university, we do not say, "Of this sum of £50,000, £10,000 is for chemistry and £10,000 for physics," but we do know in fact which is the programme the university wishes to follow, and the grant is fixed in relation to that programme, so that the allocation is in fact very definitely in relation to a programme. The university may vary that programme very slightly as time goes on. That leaves the university a certain freedom of choice as conditions may change, but beyond that the grant is made in relation to a quite clearly known programme. [Emphasis added.]<sup>49</sup>

This "clearly known" program is a joint creation of the particular university and the U.G.C. The former's continuing activities form, of course, the major part of the program, but new developments emerge from U.G.C. reactions to university proposals and from university reactions to U.G.C. guidance on the selection of worthy fields of expansion. In this give-and-take, although the Grants Committee is widely acknowledged to be very sympathetic to the university's own aspirations, it must occasionally give tactful and delicate suggestions "which come with rather special weight from a body which 'advises' both the givers and the recipients of large sums of money."<sup>50</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Sir Frederick Ogilvie, *British Universities*, Current Affairs Pamphlet No. 68 (November 27, 1948), p. 15.

<sup>45</sup> S.C.E. 1946-47, *op. cit.* (in n. 4, above), Min. of Evi., Q. 1940; and S.C.E. 1951-52, *op. cit.* (in n. 6, above), Min. of Evi., Qs. 118-121.

<sup>46</sup> P.A.C. 1951-52, *Third Report*, H.C. 253, Min. of Evi., Q. 1977.

<sup>47</sup> S.C.E. 1951-52, *op. cit.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 145.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evi., Qs. 428 and 436-438.

<sup>49</sup> S.C.E. 1946-47, *op. cit.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 1940.

<sup>50</sup> M. Fry, "The University Grants Committee, an Experiment in Administration," *Universities Quarterly*, 2 (1948), 226.

These "suggestions" are communicated to the universities in any of several different ways. Ordinarily the U.G.C. prefers to make known its wishes to the individual vice-chancellor or principal informally, verbally, and in the planning stage. If, however, the university's head officer is unable, on the basis of such intangible expressions of U.G.C. preferences, to influence his local academic governing organs to alter their cherished plans of development, the U.G.C. can resort to more overt forms of persuasion. For instance, in notifying the university of its annual recurrent block grant, the Grants Committee can indicate that it has not

... taken into account in making [the] grant the whole of the cost, or nearly the whole of the cost, which [the university administrators] have estimated on a particular field. That will be noted by the university as an indication that we are not particularly keen on their doing it on that scale. Then they will, presumably in most cases, just go more gently on that field.<sup>51</sup>

Occasionally, the Principal of London University testified before the Select Committee on Estimates, the U.G.C. uses the "ominous words, 'Such-and-such a development has not been taken into account for grant purposes,' but it rarely comes as forcibly as that."<sup>52</sup>

However, as evidenced by the quotation from Dr. Trueman, the state's influence over the use of the block grant does not stop with the mere moderation or abandonment of some university policy that is out of favor; rather, the U.G.C. assumes, without actually stating it, that the universities will, "by and large,"<sup>53</sup> remain faithful to the remainder of their proposed programs as well. Mr. Powell of the S.C.E. was troubled by this assumption; he did not understand how the U.G.C., furnishing only approximately two-thirds of an institution's funds, could demand to control the objects of expenditure of the remaining third. Sir Hector Hetherington replied soothingly, "I think demand is the wrong word. . . . It is not a compulsion, it is an honourable engagement."<sup>54</sup>

Of course, since the block grant is legally at the university's complete discretion, it is theoretically possible for an institution to ignore a U.G.C. suggestion or to depart from the proposed quinquennial program by, for instance, diverting state funds intended for the Faculty of Engineering to the endowment of a chair in classics. But as a matter of practice, Sir Maurice Bowra stated, the universities feel "a sort of moral compulsion and a lot more, I think,"<sup>55</sup> and the

<sup>51</sup> S.C.E. 1951-52, *op. cit.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 119 (Sir Edward Hale).

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 428 (Dr. D. W. Logan).

<sup>53</sup> Personal statement made to me by a vice-chancellor.

<sup>54</sup> S.C.E. 1951-52, *op. cit.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 438.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evi., Q. 428 (Sir Maurice Bowra).

question of diverted funds consequently never presents itself. Should it, in actual fact, arise, Sir Edward Hale has pointed out in testimony before the Public Accounts Committee,

...there is always, of course, the consideration that if, at the end of the quinquennium they have done things which they know the [Grants] Committee do not like or have refrained from doing things which they think the Committee might have wished them to do, that might affect the amount of grant that is allocated to them next time there is a distribution.<sup>56</sup>

The U.G.C. has explicitly recognized, however, that "there may well be a stage in which the university knows better than we do in this."<sup>57</sup> For that reason, the committee has not been overly concerned when occasionally universities "to a marginal extent" have put more emphasis on a department than the committee would have been inclined to do, and have spent more money in that direction than in another.<sup>58</sup>

One vice-chancellor expressed to me the opinion that the degree of tolerance exercised by the U.G.C. in this kind of question probably varies somewhat among institutions, based to some extent ("perhaps one-quarter") on the personalities involved, but to a much larger extent on the institution's recent record. Another vice-chancellor, estimating that about 80 per cent of his quinquennial grant was effectively committed to firmly determined activities and projects, claimed that he and his university could embark on new ventures with part of the remaining amount, provided they were ready to stand judgment on the academic results at the U.G.C.'s next quinquennial review.

#### THE UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMITTEE AND UNIVERSITY CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

The procedures by which the U.G.C. supervises the universities' expenditure of nonrecurrent capital grants are of great variety and complexity, covering the operations in close detail from start to finish. For detailed information on the nature of these methods, reference should be made to the report of the Gater Committee.<sup>59</sup> Here it must suffice merely to outline a few aspects of the control exercised over major capital projects—that is, those costing more than £50,000.

<sup>56</sup> P.A.C. 1951-52, *op. cit.*, Min. of Evl., Q. 1977.

<sup>57</sup> S.C.E. 1951-52, *op. cit.*, Min. of Evl., Q. 119.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, Min. of Evl., Q. 126. The limit to this discretion would probably occur when it was exercised at the significant expense of an activity deemed vital to the national interest by the U.G.C.

<sup>59</sup> U.G.C., *Methods Used by Universities of Contracting and of Recording and Controlling Expenditure* (1956), Cmnd. 9, Appendix C.

The nonrecurrent funds are allocated annually by the U.G.C. in the form of specific grants to particular university projects requiring land, buildings, or new equipment for recently erected buildings. The U.G.C. has not in general enjoyed using this power; with regard to the 1947-1952 quinquennium, the U.G.C. commented:

As a result of the reductions in the investment programme and the rationing of steel, the building resources at our disposal have fallen so far short of the claims upon them that our task of distributing them equitably and in the best interest of university education as a whole has become increasingly difficult and invidious. Moreover, . . . this has involved a detailed supervision of the building programmes of the universities somewhat out of keeping with our traditional relationship with them.<sup>90</sup>

Even though the U.G.C. can legally commit government funds to support capital projects only on an annual basis, the obvious difficulties which this poses for long-term planning of major activities has caused the committee to draw up a "shadow program" about two years in advance of its formal program. The level of the shadow program is based on the assumption that the amount of funds to be distributed will be approximately the same as that prevailing at the current time.

Once the general concept of a desired university building has been informally approved by the U.G.C. for inclusion on the shadow list, the administrators of the university concerned have first to submit for U.G.C. approval an outline of the instructions which they propose to give to their architects (Schedule I); and, after agreement is reached on this, the sketch plans and costs specifications completed by the architect are requested for inspection (Schedule II). These plans and specifications are scrutinized by the Architects' Division of the Ministry of Works and any disagreements among this body, the U.G.C., and the university are reconciled. If the project is approved and finally reaches the official annual list for a nonrecurrent grant, the university must seek at least the minimum prescribed number of tenders (ten for projects estimated to cost up to £200,000; twelve for those over) and then forward the tenders to the U.G.C., where the final green light is given provided the lowest bid approximates the estimated cost. If it does not, the university is asked to effect economies and reduce the contract price to an amount nearer the estimate. Further complex rules cover the eventuality of rises in cost after the signing of the contract.<sup>91</sup>

How does the U.G.C. decide which particular projects are to be given top national priority? First, obviously, it must wait to see what proportion of its total requested nonrecurrent grant the Chancellor of the

<sup>90</sup> U.G.C., *Univ. Devel. 1947-1952*, p. 66.

<sup>91</sup> U.G.C., *Methods Used by Universities . . .*, Appendix C.

Exchequer will see fit to grant. Here, one surmises, the U.G.C.'s recommendations do not emerge so nearly intact as its requests for recurrent grants are reputed to do (see above, p. 122), for the Chancellor must take careful note of the greater inflationary pressures generated by capital demands on investments, labor, and scarce materials. Once given its total annual figure, the U.G.C. then establishes the national priorities against the background of desired developments in educational policies. (The close interdependence of capital development and educational policy will be stressed further in the concluding sections of this chapter.) In setting up priorities, the U.G.C. finds some choices quite obvious, but for others, "it is a matter of judgement whether one particular building scheme is really more important than another."<sup>62</sup>

In this area of policy, the universities have probably retained less discretion than in any other. What was already a fairly tight control by the U.G.C. in the years immediately following World War II became much tighter under the pressure of successive P.A.C. criticisms, culminating around 1956 in the U.G.C.'s expressed resolve to enforce the Gater Committee's recommendations for more economical procedures in building programs. In this regard, the U.G.C. informed the P.A.C. of its determination "not only to see that [the Gater Committee recommendations were] put into effect, but that [they were] kept in effect," and added, "... we recognize the duty to be, so to speak, a policeman."<sup>63</sup>

#### THE UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMITTEE AND FACULTY SALARIES

Since its inception, the University Grants Committee has always taken a great interest in the problem of adequate remuneration for university teachers, earlier holding that the often shockingly low scales before World War II (especially for junior staff) constituted a threat to the universities' long-range vitality. Indeed, this was one issue on which the U.G.C. seems to have departed from its traditionally reserved manner of indicating its opinions to the universities: "In the early days of the Committee's existence criticism of the salaries paid to the junior staff was occasionally expressed with some indignation."<sup>64</sup>

It was not, however, until after World War II, when the level of Exchequer contributions to the universities rose so quickly, that the U.G.C. was in a position to attack the problem effectively. Finding that the universities' financial estimates for the postwar period "showed no

<sup>62</sup> S.C.E. 1951-52, *op. cit.*, Min. of Evi., Qs. 217 and 219 (Sir Edward Hale).

<sup>63</sup> P.A.C. 1955-56, *Sixth Report*, H.C. 348, Min. of Evi., Qs. 6317-6318 (Sir Edward Hale).

<sup>64</sup> M. Fry, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

uniformity of judgement as to what the future level [of salaries] should be," the U.G.C. claimed that "it was incumbent on us to give . . . some indication of the rates . . . which we could take into account in determining our grants."<sup>65</sup> The Grants Committee accordingly "suggested" a plan which would reduce, but not abolish, the existing inequalities. In addition to providing funds for a set of basic rates, the U.G.C. included an additional sum (known as the "professorial spread") which allowed the individual universities, as they wished, either to reward certain eminent or heavily burdened professors more fully, or to remunerate uniformly among the whole nonmedical professorial staff. (The medical school faculty had its own national pay scale.)

In 1948, as a result of the Spens Committee *Report*, salary scales for full-time consultants and specialists in the National Health Service were awarded which were substantially in excess of the then prevailing scales for clinical teachers in the universities' medical schools. To avoid the "depopulation" of these schools, the U.G.C. had to seek corresponding raises for the clinical teachers; but the repercussions did not stop there, for to widen further the gap between medical and other academic salaries would have created "a state of almost intolerable tension throughout the universities"<sup>66</sup> and would have made it more difficult to man the preclinical departments of the medical schools. The U.G.C. and the Vice-Chancellors' Committee accordingly sought from the Chancellor of the Exchequer an additional recurrent grant for the remainder of the quinquennium large enough to finance a general revision of academic salaries.

In order to ensure, as the Chancellor felt appropriate, that the universities would subsequently observe a certain measure of uniformity in the treatment of their staffs, the U.G.C. decided to change its salary scales from "suggestions" to "conditions." This establishment of official national scales prompted the Association of University Teachers (A.U.T.) to press for some formal wage-negotiation machinery and an arbitration procedure on the lines common in industrial and local government circles. The A.U.T. was able to interest a number of members of the House of Lords and the House of Commons, and a non-partisan deputation met the Chancellor to discuss the situation.<sup>67</sup>

Several members of the Vice-Chancellors' Committee were not much pleased with the Association's proposal, and pointed out difficulties; Sir Hector Hetherington, for example, asked:

<sup>65</sup> U.G.C., *Univ. Devel. 1935-1947*, p. 46.

<sup>66</sup> U.G.C., *Univ. Devel. 1947-1952*, pp. 37-38.

<sup>67</sup> University of London, *Report by the Principal, 1955-56*, pp. 18-19.

Who... is to sit on the other side of the table from the A.U.T.? Is it to be the University Governing Bodies or the U.G.C. or the Treasury? The Treasury alone has the money to make a binding bargain; and in fact, even as things are, it has the final voice. But if that were to happen, it would be a very big step in the direction of identifying the Government as the employer of University teachers, and of aligning University staffs quite precisely with the Civil Service.<sup>68</sup>

Furthermore, the fact that in most universities the governing boards were comprised of some (and in Oxford and Cambridge, *all*) members of the faculty tended to complicate matters, for such persons were put in the position of voting to ask the U.G.C. for higher salaries which would personally benefit themselves.

For all these reasons, the U.G.C. and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had to tread carefully to avoid giving offense. The issue was finally resolved—at least for the time being—by the Chancellor's announcement in the Commons on July 20, 1955, of the terms of a new arrangement. According to these, although negotiating machinery of the normal type was considered inappropriate, the A.U.T. would thenceforth have, equally with the Vice-Chancellors' Committee, a formal right of access to the U.G.C. for submitting its representations relating to changes in the basic salary scales. The U.G.C. would examine these representations, perhaps elucidate them by discussion, and give a considered reply. Before returning its decision, the Grants Committee would, if necessary, consult the Chancellor.<sup>69</sup>

In accordance with this new procedure, the A.U.T., after consultations with the Vice-Chancellors' Committee, presented a formal memorandum on salaries to the U.G.C. in September, 1956. The Chancellor of the Exchequer subsequently (March 12, 1957) announced higher salary scales, to be effective August 1, 1957.

#### THE UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMITTEE AND OTHER ACTIVITIES AFFECTING THE UNIVERSITIES

In addition to the continuing controls discussed above, the University Grants Committee in at least two other situations has nonrecurring opportunities to influence internal university affairs. The first of these relates to the occasion on which an institution petitions the U.G.C. and/or the Treasury to be added to the list of universities and university colleges receiving parliamentary grants. The U.G.C. has been known to stipulate conditions to its approval, usually relating to the administrative structure of the institution. For instance, when the University College of Leicester (as it then was) was allowed to join

<sup>68</sup> Hetherington, *op. cit.* (in n. 3, above), p. 11.

<sup>69</sup> *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, 5th ser., Vol. 544 (July 21, 1955), cols. 686-695.



the other grant-aided institutions in July, 1945, "a condition of that admission was that the College should amend its constitution to provide for suitable representation of the academic staff on the Council of the College and for the establishment of an Academic Board in Senate which would consist exclusively of members of the academic staff."<sup>70</sup> Variations on this kind of intervention occurred in the Grants Committee's dealings with Nottingham University and University College of North Staffordshire, among other institutions. The U.G.C.'s obvious purpose in setting such standards is to help free budding institutions from local pressures and raise them to a national minimum; to that extent, its action could be called a liberating force.

The other U.G.C. opportunity for exerting influence is a less direct and essentially unofficial one. It presumably occurs when some institution, whether already grant-aided or not, petitions Her Majesty in Council for a royal charter. The *ad hoc* committee of the Privy Council which is appointed to investigate the petition (see chapter vii) has sole legal responsibility for determining the conditions of approval, but in fact it is most likely that the U.G.C. is the chief (though not the exclusive) source of advice and suggestions to the Privy Council committee. On at least one occasion, to my knowledge, conditions set by the *ad hoc* investigating committee in response to the U.G.C.'s advice—in this instance, conditions relating to business powers—proved unacceptable to the petitioning body.

Having examined the most important modes of U.G.C. contact with the universities, we shall now consider briefly the relevant activities of other government agencies.

#### THE STATE SCHOLARSHIP SYSTEM AND THE UNIVERSITIES

Both the Ministry of Education and the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, the two national agencies most concerned with awarding state scholarships, have scrupulously observed the universities' right to control completely their selection of students. Indeed, the issuing of a state award is contingent upon the prospective scholar's having already been admitted to a college or university.

There was a period between 1947 and 1949, however, when two issues relating to state scholarships did cause some controversy among the universities. The first concerned the Ministry's attempt to meet the problem of allocation: approximately nine state scholars out of ten were choosing to attend Oxford, Cambridge, or the University of Lon-

<sup>70</sup> *The Humble Petition of the University College of Leicester to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty in Council*, June 30, 1956, par. 4.

don. Before the war, when only 360 such awards were being made, this disproportion did not create any serious difficulty. But when the number was more than doubled in 1947, representatives of the other institutions pressed for some system of allocation. As a result, a scheme was inaugurated whereby, in 1948 for example, 150 awards out of 800 could be used at Oxford, 150 at Cambridge, 180 at London, and 420 at the other universities and university colleges in England and Wales.

This system received severe criticism, "partly because it savour[ed] of direction by a Government Department, and partly because it [had] been alleged to penalise state scholars in comparison with open scholars and holders of local scholarships,"<sup>71</sup> who were free to choose their own university if they could obtain admission to it. The allocations were accordingly dropped in 1949, and the only national provisions which now operate with regard to scholarships are the very broad ones distinguishing between awards in the arts and those in the sciences, and between awards for undergraduate and those for postgraduate work. While scholarships in all four of these categories have increased on an absolute scale, the recent trend has been somewhat in favor of the sciences and postgraduate training.

The other source of disagreement between the state and the universities in respect to scholarships resulted from an expressed "hope" of the Working Party on University Awards (falling outside that group's terms of reference, it could not be a "recommendation") that the universities would set up a central "clearing-house" for dealing with applications for admission.<sup>72</sup> It was envisaged that such a step would help meet the complex problem of multiple applications by students and ultimately, perhaps, even lead to greater coördination among the universities of their varying entrance requirements and regulations. Although the universities, through the Vice-Chancellors' Committee, did undertake to work on these difficulties,<sup>73</sup> they did not approve of the "clearing-house" concept, for it smacked too much of centralization and a possible lessening in the personal relations between the universities, on the one hand, and the secondary schools and candidates for admission, on the other. The state, therefore, did not press the matter further.

<sup>71</sup> Ministry of Education, Working Party on University Awards, *Report* (1948), p. 7. See also *New Statesman and Nation*, Vol. 36, No. 927 (1948), p. 524.

<sup>72</sup> Ministry of Education, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>73</sup> For instance, by the appointment of a Vice-Chancellors' Committee's Subcommittee on University Entrance Requirements, and by a research project, sponsored by the Vice-Chancellors' Committee, on student application records. See above, p. 91, note 62.

## STATE SECURITY AND THE UNIVERSITIES

Separate from the issue of faculty salaries and also that of student scholarships, but related to both, is the question of state interest in the "loyalty" of the university faculty and students.

There is little evidence of real substance to be found on this matter in Britain. The Government—seemingly no matter which party is in power—continues the practice, demonstrated in the 1934 Laski incident (see above, p. 67), of noninvolvement in the political affairs of university staff members. Some assert that it is more difficult for Marxists to receive university appointments, or that, if appointed, their promotions come more slowly.<sup>71</sup> But, even if true, this seems to be entirely a matter of internal university policies, for the state as such has no part in the hiring or firing of faculty members or in their conditions of tenure. This principle was reaffirmed in a House of Lords debate in 1948<sup>72</sup> and again, in an amusing context, in the Commons on July 14, 1953. On this second occasion, the "subversive" opposition of fourteen university vice-chancellors and principals to commercial television was being criticized by a Tory speaker, who asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer to what extent the grants to universities stipulated that officers in their official capacity should refrain from taking part in controversial politics. Mr. Butler replied: "No such stipulation is made. . . . We still live in a free country. The political activities of university staff are a matter for the university authorities." To this statement, Hugh Gaitskell, then acting as "Shadow Chancellor," added the support of the Labour Party: "It is no part of the Treasury's business to try to suppress political opinions in the universities."<sup>73</sup>

There has equally been no state attempt to screen the loyalty of university students, and all varieties of student political societies flourish in abundance. However, in cases of applications by students for positions with government agencies engaged in highly secret work, the state security apparatus has had recourse to university circles for information regarding the applicants' loyalty to the nation. This has occasioned protests from several student groups and from some of the members of the Association of University Teachers, who argue *inter alia* that asking university tutors to give such opinions might do serious damage to the special relationship between teacher and student. One person, for example, insisted that the practice ". . . exposes the teacher who answers to the charge of being a tool of the state; the teacher who

<sup>71</sup> See, for example, *New Statesman and Nation*, Vol. 52, No. 1346 (1956), p. 842.

<sup>72</sup> *Parl. Deb. (Lords)*, 5th ser., Vol. 165 (1948), cols. 1261-1263.

<sup>73</sup> *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, 5th ser., Vol. 517 (1953), col. 1985.

refuses of being an enemy of the state; and all the teachers to the charge that students cannot talk freely to them or act upon their beliefs in the presence of their teachers.”<sup>77</sup>

Others in the A.U.T. have contended that university teachers, as citizens, should not shirk their responsibilities to the state and that, furthermore, there is no significant difference between telling a private employer and informing the state of the “good character” of applicants in question.

At the meeting of the A.U.T. Central Council in December, 1956, a motion was passed declaring, first, that university teachers ought not to be asked questions about the political or religious opinions and activities of their students, and, second, that if such questions were asked, the answering of them should be left to the discretion of the individual teacher.<sup>78</sup>

Then, on May 22, 1957, in the House of Lords, Lord Chorley, general secretary of the A.U.T., launched some dramatic new charges relating to state security procedures in the universities:

... the security services have been infiltrating, so to speak, more and more into the universities, and they have been calling upon university teachers to disclose information not only about their students, but, more and more frequently now, about their colleagues. . . . Some things I have heard have been almost unbelievable. If teachers are being asked to report upon the general loyalty of colleagues it means, in effect, that they are being encouraged to act as spies; to find their way into their colleagues' studies, even to pry into the drawers of their desks.<sup>79</sup>

Although Lord Chorley later conceded that the last part of his indictment was only his assumption of what was possibly taking place, the general situation was deemed serious enough for the A.U.T. to undertake an enquiry and for questions to be raised about it in the Commons the following week. R. A. Butler, then (June 6, 1957) serving as Home Secretary, replied for the Government that the security arrangements being used were those generally approved by an earlier all-party conference of Privy Counsellors and that “there has been no alteration, that I can see, of a marked nature since that date. . . . I can undertake to say that there is no abuse in this matter . . . [which] will be closely watched by me, as the guardian of private liberty.”<sup>80</sup>

A letter to me from a member of the A.U.T. reported that as of November, 1957, “the enquiry which is being carried out by the A.U.T. is

<sup>77</sup> Dr. H. S. Ferns, of the Birmingham A.U.T., as quoted in *Times Educational Supplement*, December 14, 1956.

<sup>78</sup> As reported in *Times Educational Supplement*, December 28, 1956.

<sup>79</sup> *Parl. Deb. (Lords)*, 5th ser., Vol. 203 (1957), cols. 1122-1124.

<sup>80</sup> As reported in the *Manchester Guardian*, June 7, 1956.

not yet complete, but so far as a preliminary survey of the result goes, it would appear to be rather reassuring."

#### THE STATE AND UNIVERSITY RESEARCH

It is generally agreed that the ability to conduct independent fundamental research is an essential aspect of university freedom. In Britain, the danger of excessive governmental control in that sphere is greatly alleviated by two facts: first, only approximately 7-8 per cent of the total university income is derived from state-sponsored research; and, second, this state money (in 1955, nearly £3,000,000) is distributed by not one, but a variety of government agencies and departments.<sup>81</sup>

Some research, for instance, is financed by the universities from the block grants which they receive via the U.G.C.; this is subject to the least control, for the Grants Committee has felt it would not be "proper" to seek detailed breakdowns from the universities on the relative uses made of subsidies for teaching and research.<sup>82</sup>

For particular research projects of special interest to the state, the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, the Medical and Agricultural Research Councils, and several executive departments (for example, the Ministry of Supply and the Colonial Office) may make research contracts with university laboratories working in the same field. The largest single category of research handled by one agency is the D.S.I.R.'s nuclear physics program, which, because of its vital importance to the nation, has been receiving nearly half of the D.S.I.R.'s funds budgeted for support of the pure sciences at the universities.

The D.S.I.R. has indicated, however, that it regards its activities in this area as experimental and temporary, and that it looks forward to the time when such work will become a regular aspect of university study and research, and, as such, will be financed from the U.G.C. block grant.<sup>83</sup>

In accepting outside sponsorship of research projects,<sup>84</sup> the universities are faced with the same danger of "unnatural moulding" as that which affects educational policy.<sup>85</sup> Government and industry are under-

<sup>81</sup> For a general discussion of "The Financing of Research in Universities by Outside Bodies," see the Home Universities Conference, *Report of the Proceedings*, 1955, pp. 47-80.

<sup>82</sup> S.C.E. 1946-47, *op. cit.* (in n. 4, above), Appendix II.

<sup>83</sup> Dodds, Hacker, and Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

<sup>84</sup> According to Dr. V. E. Coslett, in 1951-52 research funds from government agencies furnished approximately 7 per cent, those from industry about 5 per cent, and those from foundations and societies 2 per cent of total university income. In Home Universities Conference, *Report*... (1955), cited in n. 81, above, p. 48.

<sup>85</sup> See the U.G.C. quotation above, p. 144.

standably preoccupied with more practical interests than those of the academicians; but, natural as this bias may be, if allowed free rein at the universities, it might tend to stress applied research projects to such an extent that the universities would find their role as centers of basic research greatly altered. The U.G.C. has called attention to this danger in the following terms:

University research must not become enslaved to the demands of any external agency, and it is essential not only that work done under contract should be harmonious with natural development of the department in which it is undertaken, but also that individual members of staff should have full scope for the prosecution of research activities which are without interest for outside bodies.<sup>86</sup>

In spite of this admission of a potential threat, the Grants Committee felt in 1953 that the government departments and agencies were not yet making excessive demands upon the universities for contract research, and that the proportion of university funds derived therefrom had not risen to undesirable levels.<sup>87</sup> There has been no significant alteration in the ratio since that time.

#### A SUMMING UP: STATE POLICIES AND UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY

In the Introduction to this study it was noted that the universities, in deciding their policies, had always been subjected to numerous pressures from public and private sources, and that in a democratic society these pressures were inevitable and perhaps even wholesome, for, it was stated, no social institutions—not even universities—should operate as laws unto themselves. The problem relating to university autonomy vis-à-vis the state was defined, therefore, as being one of determining whether legitimate state influence had passed over the almost indefinable boundary into illegitimate state control. A judgment of this complex issue will now be undertaken.

From the evidence given in the foregoing pages it is obvious that now, as compared with fifty or even fifteen years ago, the state intervenes quantitatively and qualitatively to a much greater degree in university affairs. One has only to note the government's role in such matters as capital expansion, faculty salaries, and occasionally even university administrative structure, to realize that the discretionary power of university governing boards has been considerably lessened by the state.

However, before a verdict of "state-dominated universities" can be declared, it must be demonstrated that the government's interventions

<sup>86</sup> U.G.C., *Univ. Devel. 1947-1952*, p. 43.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

have been such as to alter the essential nature of university self-government, and this in turn requires a definition of the essential attributes of autonomy.

#### THE ESSENTIAL ATTRIBUTES OF AUTONOMY

Sir Hector Hetherington, in a brief and lucid review of the evolution of the British university system from 1914 to 1954, has stated that "under modern conditions, the area of a University's free choice must be smaller than it was. But there *is* such an area; and within that area the most important decisions lie." In Sir Hector's view, there are two fundamental rights on which the universities should in all events be prepared to insist:

... the Universities should each retain full responsibility for its own appointments, ... should choose its teachers, and, if need be, dismiss them. That is the primary condition of University freedom, and the only ground of assurance that its members may speak and teach in whatever way they are responsibly led to do... the corollary is that the University must retain full responsibility for the organisation of its courses, and for the character and standards of the instruction given within its walls.<sup>85</sup>

Sir Eric Ashby, Vice-Chancellor of Queen's University, Belfast, has also written on the essential conditions of academic freedom. Subdividing Sir Hector's two points into three and adding a fourth, Sir Eric argues that the academic staff in modern British universities and *not* the partially lay governing bodies (thus, *ex hypothesi*, not the state) should have at least *de facto* control of the following university functions:<sup>86</sup>

1. The admission and examination of students
2. The curricula for courses of study
3. The appointment and tenure of office of the academic staff
4. The allocation of income among different categories of expenditure

To these four vital functions should perhaps be added a fifth, relating to research, although it might be implicit in either Sir Hector's "conditions of tenure" or Sir Eric's "allocation of income among different categories of expenditure:"

5. The final authority in determining the proper subjects of research<sup>87</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Hetherington, *op. cit.* (in n. 3, above), pp. 12-13.

<sup>86</sup> Sir Eric Ashby, "Self Government in Modern British Universities," *Science and Freedom*, Vol. 4, No. 7 (1956), p. 4.

<sup>87</sup> "The conduct of fundamental scientific research is an essential function of the universities, and freedom to pursue any line of thought or subject of research is jealously guarded." S.C.E. 1946-47, *op. cit.*, par. 66.

## STATE POLICIES AND THE ESSENTIAL ATTRIBUTES OF AUTONOMY

In the light of the five criteria listed above, it is desirable to re-examine the nature of the state's interventions in university affairs, in order to judge whether "legitimate influence has become illegitimate control."

First, it seems clear that the state does not, either through its scholarship system or otherwise, control the admission or examination of students. The government does influence to some extent the distribution of students between the arts and the sciences, but this influence relates more to its role regarding the allocation of university income, which will be considered below.

Second, the state does not in any way control the general curricula of the universities or their specific courses of study. When an institution first petitions for national aid, the U.G.C. may require that some of its courses or fields be brought up to a minimum university standard; but, beyond this, the continuing controls are entirely internal.

Third, the state does not, either through its regulation of faculty salaries, its security program, or otherwise, control the conditions of appointment and tenure of the academic staff.

Fourth, the state certainly influences but does not yet "control" university research programs. However, while the universities are not at present unduly hampered by government demands in this area, the danger is one of degree, and further gradual encroachment should be carefully watched.

On the fifth attribute of autonomy—the power to allocate income among different categories of expenditure (which in simpler language could be called "control of educational policy")—no unqualified answer can be given; for the question of control here is of a far more subtle character. In the first place, state control of university capital building programs must be related to educational policy, because in times of massive university expansion—especially in scientific fields, for which laboratories and physical facilities are very important—university educational policies of tomorrow obviously depend upon state building programs of today. Sir James Mountford, Vice-Chancellor of Liverpool University, estimated that, because of delays, shortages, and inflation, only about one-third of the increase in physical plant required to fulfill the Barlow Committee's recommendations had been obtained between 1945 and 1957.<sup>61</sup> When to this tremendous backlog are added the extra buildings necessary to support the further state-requested ex-

<sup>61</sup> Sir James Mountford, "University Expansion," Part III, *Manchester Guardian*, May 18, 1957.



pansion of the universities from a capacity of 85,000 students to one of 120,000, some appreciation of the magnitude of the problem emerges. The priorities for buildings in science and technology which will be given in the period 1957-1967 will have a definite effect upon future educational policies, for the proportion of students in science and technology is expected to have grown from 25.9 per cent in 1938-39 to 44.2 per cent in 1965-66, and the corresponding percentages for arts students to have declined from 44.7 per cent to 38.3 per cent.<sup>12</sup>

It should be remembered, however, that although the state controls the final establishment of capital priorities, the initiative in formulating the building programs still lies with the universities, and the U.G.C. is no doubt strongly influenced in its *general* evaluation of priorities by the expression of opinion from the university authorities. Furthermore, since the teaching of the arts is much less dependent upon capital plant, and since the universities, even by 1965, will still have sizable numbers of arts students, the conclusion must be that, although the state most certainly influences educational policies through its regulation of building programs, it does not control them.

There remain to be considered, however, two other factors even more directly related to possible control of university educational policies: namely, the explicit conditions attached to earmarked grants to the universities and the implicit conditions accompanying the block grants. The U.G.C. readily acknowledged that earmarked grants involved an intensified state intervention in university affairs, but maintained that the disadvantages of the program were modified by three factors: (1) universities were free to turn down earmarked grants; (2) the grants were a *temporary* expedient; and (3) they were a *necessary* evil. However, evidence offered in this chapter indicates, first, that the universities were not so free to refuse their coöperation as they might have appeared to be; second, that although earmarked grants *were* temporary, the U.G.C. conditions for terminating them,<sup>13</sup> along with institutional factors such as the appointment of tenured staff and the acceptance of a specialized student body, tended to entrench the protected fields of study; and, third, that it really was not a question, as the U.G.C. alleged,<sup>14</sup> of earmarked funds versus none at all, but of faster progress toward state goals with earmarked money and more

<sup>12</sup> Sir James Mountford, "University Expansion," Part I, *Manchester Guardian*, May 16, 1957.

<sup>13</sup> See above, p. 148.

<sup>14</sup> The U.G.C. stated in 1953 (*Univ. Devel. 1947-1952*, p. 52) that "earmarking could be said to restrict the freedom of the universities if the alternative was the same total of recurrent grant with no restriction on its use. But this was not the alternative. We do not think that the additional grants which were provided to

controls over university affairs versus slower progress and more university freedom. On the basis of this reasoning, then, and in view of the fact that the earmarked grants were halted after five years, it must be concluded that state influence over educational policies did increase markedly under earmarked grants, and that, had these been either extended in time or broadened in scope, this influence would eventually have constituted a serious threat to university control over educational policy.

But, since block grants extend to the entire range of university activities and since they are now the exclusive means of transmitting the recurrent state grants to the universities, the really crucial judgment about whether state actions constitute excessive control of educational policy must be rendered on the operation of the block-grant system. Paradoxically enough, the preceding pages have offered materials with which to build a case for both excessive and nonexcessive state control in this respect.

On the one hand, it was shown that the U.G.C. allots the block grants on the basis of detailed university explanations of proposed programs; that the U.G.C. expects the universities subsequently to deviate but "very slightly" from these programs; that the U.G.C., by informal oral "suggestions" before their preparation and by occasional written "suggestions" afterwards, "influences" the contents of the proposed development programs; and finally, that in case of university sins of omission or commission, the U.G.C. has underneath its velvet glove the implicit sanctions of the periodic quinquennial review. State influence is, therefore, definitely a major factor to be reckoned with in the formulation of university educational policy.

On the other hand, it can be seen that the universities' proposed development programs are for the most part composed of the institutions'

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develop certain fields of study would have been given *at all* except for those specific purposes." (Emphasis added.)

This argument implies that the state had so little confidence in its ability to "influence" with block grants the objects of university expenditures that, without earmarked grants, it would have appropriated no additional funds at all to support the special fields. This explanation does not correspond to Sir Edward Hale's confident assertion to the Select Committee on Estimates in 1952 that the U.G.C. "expect[ed] to be able to" get the "same effect" by other means if earmarked grants were stopped (S.C.E. 1951-52, *op. cit.* (in n. 6, above), Min. of Evi., Q. 582). See also the 1905 precedent in which the U.G.C.'s predecessors spoke of the state's ability to influence universities through control of the block grants (above, p. 53).

Thus, it would seem that the use of earmarked grants was less a question of "all or nothing at all" and more a matter for political decision on the question whether the urgency of national needs in higher education justified the temporary greater restrictions on university freedom which the obviously quicker earmarked grants entailed.

own continuing activities; that, for most of the new projects planned, the initiative comes mainly from inside the universities, and even on the occasions in which this is not true, the universities are carefully consulted by the U.G.C.; that after the block grant has been awarded, the universities are allowed a certain flexibility in altering and adapting it; and, finally, that the universities retain complete freedom in administering it. With this degree of discretion in policy formulation and execution, the universities certainly cannot be regarded as mere organs for the implementation of the state's will.

The explanation for this split verdict is that there is now operating in this area a delicate balance of forces, between the state and universities, whose ultimate relative strengths have yet to be tested. Thus, although university discretion in several important spheres of action has been lessened significantly by state actions, the universities' operations have *thus far* been brought into the framework of national planning without loss of the essential attributes of university autonomy. The real test has not yet occurred, however, for limited state goals regarding the universities have permitted the latter bodies to coöperate voluntarily, and therefore no serious conflict of interest has resulted. But the continuation of this mutual accommodation between the state and the universities is dependent on at least three general conditions, any major change in which might alter the present relationship and require a reappraisal of the conclusion drawn above. In the next chapter the three general conditions and some factors which might operate to change them will be considered.

## CHAPTER X

# THE POLITICS OF UNIVERSITY-STATE RELATIONS

IN THE PRECEDING chapter it was argued that, notwithstanding their integration into the framework of national planning, the universities have thus far retained the essential attributes of autonomy. This state of affairs was explained by the fact that, because the state has been careful to limit the nature of its demands upon the universities, these institutions have coöperated voluntarily and no serious conflict of interest has yet arisen. In this chapter I shall undertake an analysis of three general conditions (stressing particularly the one most political) which seem to be the main reasons for the limited nature of the state's policies regarding the universities. Using the current problem of technological education as an example, I shall then offer some speculations on what *might* happen to university-state relations were any of these general conditions to alter appreciably.

### CONDITIONS LIMITING STATE DEMANDS

#### THE COMMON OUTLOOK OF GOVERNMENT AND UNIVERSITY LEADERS

Many observers have commented on the high degree of informality in the operations of the University Grants Committee and on the consequent importance of key personalities.<sup>1</sup> It is therefore a fact of the highest significance that the principal figures of virtually every cabinet (in all parties) and of the U.G.C. staff and the Treasury have been educated in the universities<sup>2</sup> (Oxford and Cambridge in particular)

<sup>1</sup> The Select Committee on Estimates stated in 1952: "[We] recognize the practical efficacy of the frequent and informal meetings... which form the basis of the committee's work, but [we] have gained the impression that it may also depend to a large extent upon particular personalities." S.C.E. 1951-52, *Fifth Report*, H.C. 163, par. 49. See also Sir Hector Hetherington, *The British University System, 1914-1954*, Aberdeen University Studies, No. 133 (1954), p. 12; and Sir William (now Lord) Beveridge, *Power and Influence* (1953), pp. 207 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Notable exceptions to the university-educated Prime Ministers have been David Lloyd George and Sir Winston Churchill. In Appendix VI may be found data on the British university and public school backgrounds of members of the Conservative cabinet of 1951, the Labour cabinet of 1945, and the Liberal cabinet of 1909. These three cabinets were chosen as more or less random samples of Governments by each of the three parties which have held power in the twentieth century. While the gross statistics are not too meaningful, since they do not distinguish between major and minor Government positions, it is interesting to note that 30 of the 54 cabinet positions in the three Governments sampled were filled by university men (including 2 graduates of German universities, not listed in the "educational background" column), and that of these, 23 of the more important posts were held by

and have demonstrated sympathetic understanding of the essential purposes and problems of higher education. President Dodds of Princeton University has said of the British scene: "The success of the U.G.C. rests fundamentally upon unwritten conventions and personal and social relations of a homogeneous community of university men, in and out of government, who share common tastes and a common outlook."<sup>2</sup>

Some of the persons in key government posts have taught at the universities; some have received honorary fellowships; some have served as legal advisors or on the boards of governors of the universities; and some have been appointed university rectors or chancellors (honorary positions). It is inconceivable that, short of a major economic or political crisis (a possibility to be considered below), these people should ever initiate any state action hostile to the universities. Rather, their influence is probably exerted to see that state requests to universities are held to a minimum and are limited in type to projects not completely alien to university tradition in Britain.

#### STATE FINANCIAL STABILITY

A second general condition without which the state demands upon the universities could not easily be limited is a healthy Exchequer; for the absence of extreme financial duress means that the state does not have to demand the absolute rationalization of all the institutions whose work it subsidizes. Moreover, a Treasury which can afford to support not only the projects favored by the state but also many suggested by the universities is more likely to enjoy the voluntary co-operation of those institutions. The "slack" in state policy permitted by this liberality acts to relieve tension all the way along the line, into the very heart of internal university politics.

...the comparative affluence of the universities at the present time, owing to the size of Government grants, has made it less necessary for [university] Councils to exercise a strict restraining control over finance. If government money were, in the future, to flow less freely, Councils would have to devote more time to

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alumni of Oxford or Cambridge. Similarly, of a "straw sample" which I took of top civil servants in the Treasury and the U.G.C., all eight had attended Oxford or Cambridge. See also R. K. Kelsall, *Higher Civil Servants in Britain* (1955), chapter vi.

<sup>2</sup> H. W. Dodds, L. Hacker, and L. Rogers, *Government Assistance to Universities in Great Britain* (1952), pp. 102-107. Some British figures have expressed amusement over Dodds's mention of the symbolic significance of the key personnel's common membership in the Athenaeum Club, but in the course of five visits to that august institution to meet various university and government officials, I was equally impressed with the amount of state business (including university affairs) which appeared to be expedited there over tea or sherry.

scrutinising university budgets, and relations between professors and the controllers of the purse might be less smooth.<sup>4</sup>

In a comparison of the British and French universities made in 1947, an observer acknowledged and praised the greater flexibility which the "slack" in state policy allowed the British institutions, but pointed out the economic "fact of life" that it was a much more costly arrangement:

... [in Britain] very little positive planning has been done in the past to avoid duplication or an excessive dispersion of limited resources, or to encourage common standards in appointments, examinations, and exchanges of staff or information between universities...

The Chancellor may not forever be able to keep the Exchequer tap running so freely. And if so, the universities of Britain may have much to learn from the more positive allocation of resources, the greater possibilities of guidance and economic distribution of talent and money which can be organised under a more coordinated system.<sup>5</sup>

However, the case for rationalizing British university education holds little appeal for either academic or governmental members of the British system, "where centralisation may still be carped at and *Gleichschaltung* is an obscene word."<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, the student of the present scene is tempted to speculate about what would happen to university-state relations in Britain if an extreme financial crisis were to bring forth another Geddes or May Economy Committee.

#### THE ABSENCE OF PARTISAN CONTROVERSY ABOUT THE UNIVERSITIES

Because "the general public regards university education much as it did secondary education before 1902, as a remote sphere with which it has no concern,"<sup>7</sup> the universities have not, in the recent past, been a source of partisan controversy among the people at large, in Parliament, or between the parties.

President Dodds has offered one explanation for this British phenomenon. According to Dodds, since the universities serve such a relatively small proportion of college-age youth in Britain, and since they proffer such a specialized academic training, the general public is little concerned with higher education, and when it is concerned,

<sup>4</sup> Editorial, *Universities Quarterly*, 3 (1949), 800. It seems obvious that professors disappointed by the failure of their own projects to receive financial support would make more severe critics of programs proposed by the state.

<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth Layton, "French Universities in 1947," *Universities Quarterly*, 1 (1947), 391-392 and 398-399.

<sup>6</sup> H. V. Wiseman, "Parliament and the University Grants Committee," *Public Administration*, 34 (1956), 75.

<sup>7</sup> Sir Ernest (now Lord) Simon, "The Universities and the Government," *Universities Quarterly*, 1 (1946), 90.

does not attempt to "substitute its discretion for that of the expert judgments of the universities."<sup>8</sup> If the British universities were attempting, in the American manner, to give a broad general education to great masses of students, they would soon find the general public more interested and also more confident of its right to intervene.

Another factor contributing to the lack of controversy is the fact that the minority which does receive a university education has been changing in nature from a social to an intellectual elite.<sup>9</sup> Thus the Labour Party, which, as the self-styled "party of the workers by hand and brain," might otherwise have demanded that the state force university "citadels of privilege" to be thrown open to all, has shown itself to be just as willing as the Conservatives to support the universities in their current course of development. This bipartisan support of the universities also relates, of course, to the community of outlook, described earlier in this study, between important figures in the parties and influential persons in the universities.

The absence of partisan controversy over the universities in the public at large is reflected by the dearth of party material dealing with the universities. Neither at the central offices of the Conservative Party nor at the Labour Party headquarters was I able to uncover any party documents specifically relating to the universities.<sup>10</sup> The Labour Party at its annual conference deliberations since 1945 has seemed most interested in making sure that the number of university students be vastly increased and that no worthy student be impeded by lack of financial means.<sup>11</sup> Its 1955 Election Manifesto, *Forward with Labour*, merely declared: "To prevent children being . . . denied a University education for lack of means, a national scale of Maintenance allowances will be established, and every student admitted to a University will be entitled, in case of need, to a State Scholarship."

The Conservative Party's statements on universities have been based on the philosophy expressed in a document at the Conservative Research Center which I was permitted to see and quote: "A Party line on university tuition—or, for that matter, any other field of univer-

<sup>8</sup> Dodds, Hacker, and Rogers, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-107.

<sup>9</sup> The change is coming, but as yet is imperfectly realized; see J. E. Floud, A. H. Hasley, and F. M. Martin, *Social Class and Educational Opportunity* (1956).

<sup>10</sup> There was, however, a Fabian research study of the universities: Quintus (pseudonym), *Universities and the Future*, Fabian Research Series, No. 120 (1947). This document was essentially an elaboration of the Labour themes on higher education expressed at the annual conferences. (Literature on the question of university seats in the House of Commons has not been considered here, as this issue does not relate directly to the control of internal university policies.)

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, Labour Party, Forty-fifth Annual Conference, *Report* . . . (1946), p. 192; and the Forty-sixth Annual Conference, *Report* . . . (1947), p. 200.

sity administration—would be altogether inappropriate, especially as the Party is the first to recognise and honour the traditional autonomy of British universities." Restatements of this principle are to be found in the Conservative Election Manifesto of 1955, *Unity in Peace and Progress*, and in the party's official book, *The New Conservatism*.<sup>12</sup>

But if neither party has taken a broad stand on university affairs in its public information activities, they have both necessarily had to deal occasionally with such issues as these arose in Parliament. Even here, however, historical and procedural factors have tended to reinforce the substantive ones discussed above, combining to make university affairs nearly immune from partisan controversy.

Historically, the traditions and precedents which have protected the universities from partisan politics were "established over a long period and developed when the Universities were not of such great public concern."<sup>13</sup> It is uncertain whether, if continuing university-state relations had developed later and under different circumstances (for example, if early national grants to the universities had been larger), the same traditions would have arisen. Faced with such traditions (and in Britain, the importance of these must not be underestimated), the Member of Parliament who is interested in university affairs is discouraged from attempting to debate them; and if he does attempt to do so, he must adopt a defensive posture, explaining at great length his desire to avoid any interference with university independence, and so on. There is, in other words, a general understanding, based on precedent, that university affairs should not be dragged into partisan debate.

There is, in addition, a procedural obstacle for those Members of Parliament, who, notwithstanding the deterrents already described, still desire to express views regarding the universities. Ordinarily, the most logical occasion on which to do this would be the debate on the Education Estimates; but in Britain, because the university grants were purposely placed under the Treasury Vote and because the U.G.C., created by a Treasury Minute, is without statutory authority,<sup>14</sup> there is no such opportunity. This situation caused a great deal of misunderstanding in the first years after the U.G.C. was established; on at least three different occasions,<sup>15</sup> attempts made to discuss the university grants under the Board of Education Vote were ruled out of order. This prompted

<sup>12</sup> Conservative Party, *Unity in Peace and Progress* (1955), p. 192.

<sup>13</sup> Wiseman, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

<sup>14</sup> See above, p. 118, and text and note 28 on p. 58.

<sup>15</sup> April 12, 1921; July 22, 1924; and July 23, 1925; to be found respectively in *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, 5th ser., Vol. 140, col. 1037; Vol. 176, col. 1222; and Vol. 186, col. 2548.



one Member of Parliament to ask the Prime Minister whether his attention had been drawn to the fact that

the only opportunity of discussing the grants, . . . the position of women students and teachers at Cambridge University, . . . and the important recommendations of the Royal Commissions on the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge will be upon the Treasury Vote and not on the Vote for the Board of Education; and whether, seeing that this is not a satisfactory method in view of the far-reaching character of the issues raised, he will be prepared to grant a separate day for the Parliamentary discussion of these problems?<sup>16</sup>

Austen Chamberlain, Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the House, replied on behalf of the Prime Minister by pointing out that arrangements could be made for discussion of university issues on one of the days allotted to Supply debates, if a request were made in the usual manner. Mr. Chamberlain might also have mentioned the possibility of utilizing an Adjournment Debate for this purpose. In neither case, however, is a debate on universities easy to bring about, for not only is the legislative calendar very crowded, but new items can ordinarily be included only at the expense of other points of business and there is a natural tendency to relegate the less urgent or noncontroversial matters to the bottom of the priority list.

It is not surprising, then, that in 1957 Lord Pakenham should have stated (not quite accurately) that he could not "trace in this House [the Lords] or in another place [the Commons] any general debate on British universities."<sup>17</sup> In point of fact, outside of one brief Adjournment Debate in 1924<sup>18</sup> and what amounted to a short soliloquy during a Supply Day in 1957,<sup>19</sup> the Commons has not debated the university system or university-state relations. The Lords, however, did discuss (somehow "debate" does not seem the proper word for the genteel deliberations of the upper chamber) "University Finance" in 1919,<sup>20</sup> "University Education" in 1947,<sup>21</sup> and on Lord Pakenham's initiative, the latter topic again in 1957.<sup>22</sup> The first of these discussions amounted to a brief plea by lords of all political allegiances that contributions to universities be deductible from the Excess Profits Tax; the second concerned Lord Lindsay's request for a departmental committee to undertake a fundamental review of the whole university system;<sup>23</sup> and the third ranged over many university problems, but centered on the sub-

<sup>16</sup> Mr. William Graham, M.P., *ibid.*, Vol. 153 (1922), cols. 957-958.

<sup>17</sup> *Parl. Deb. (Lords)*, 5th ser., Vol. 203 (1957), col. 1069.

<sup>18</sup> *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, 5th ser., Vol. 176 (1924), cols. 3195-3201.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 570 (1957), cols. 1296 and 1352.

<sup>20</sup> *Parl. Deb. (Lords)*, 5th ser., Vol. 41 (1919), cols. 393-413.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 147 (1947), cols. 696 ff.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 203 (1957), cols. 1069 ff.

<sup>23</sup> See above, p. 85.

ject of the proper relationship between the arts and the sciences. This same subject was covered to some extent in three recent debates on scientific and technological education, two of which were held in the Commons and one in the Lords.<sup>21</sup>

The Commons and the Lords were both naturally involved in the various pieces of university legislation which have been passed since 1919, but only on two occasions was the debate more than nominal, and on only one of these could partisan politics be possibly said to have arisen. On this latter occasion, in 1923, some rather heated exchanges took place when the Commons took up the Oxford and Cambridge Universities bill, after the *Report* of the Royal Commission on these universities had been presented.<sup>22</sup> The chief source of disagreement concerned the questions whether it was desirable that women be admitted to full equal status at Cambridge University, and if so, whether the state had a right to compel such a development. The Cambridge Committee section of the Royal Commission had strongly backed the women's right to equal status, but had hesitated before the prospect of state compulsion to gain this end. Quite a few Conservatives and Liberals joined a solid Labour phalanx in favoring the establishment of equal women's rights at Cambridge,<sup>23</sup> but, for the most part, were not willing to vote to force the issue. As a result, the unsuccessful support for state intervention came predominantly from the Labourites, who were then stigmatized by some of their opponents as trying to "Prussianise" the universities.<sup>24</sup> One Socialist Member offered this justification for his vote: "Autonomy for the university is insisted upon, but then autonomy very often means 'keeping it in the family,' [and] . . . an autonomy administered by people who have been educated in the machine is probably the very worst thing that could be for the progressive teaching of that university."<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup> *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, 5th ser., Vol. 518 (1952), cols. 41-165; and Vol. 554 (1956), cols. 1641-1764; *Parl. Deb. (Lords)*, 5th ser., Vol. 200 (1956), cols. 426 ff.

<sup>22</sup> This Royal Commission is discussed briefly above, p. 39.

<sup>23</sup> This particular issue seemed to arouse some of the most amusing and irrelevant digressions in parliamentary debate. Major Sir Bernard Falle, for example, somewhat belatedly opposed the presence of women students at Cambridge (they had already been there for fifty years!) with the earthy argument that "anybody who has bred horses will tell you that it is folly in the extreme to put colts and fillies together whatever their age," and was elaborating on this theme, using heifers and bullocks, when Keir Hardie intervened to request that the discussion be kept "above that level." *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, 5th ser., Vol. 166 (1923), col. 2698.

A Labour speaker had earlier supported equal women's rights at Cambridge with an explanation of their value as "pals" and with an aside on his preference for Cambridge in the Annual Oxford-Cambridge Boat Race. *Ibid.*, Vol. 165 (1923), col. 1891.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 166 (1923), col. 2741.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 165 (1923), col. 1885.

On the other side, several sons of the Isis and the Cam bewailed the fact that, for lack of generous millionaires, Oxford and Cambridge should have to submit to a royal commission in order to join the grant list for pittances of £30,000 a year.<sup>29</sup> Lord Cecil, however, based his opposition to state action on slightly different grounds: "Reform a university: You may as well reform a cheese—there is a certain flavour about a university as there is about a cheese, springing from its antiquity, which may be very easily lost by mishandling."<sup>30</sup>

The other bill on which there was extended debate was the University of London bill in 1926. The Haldane Commission of 1913 had originally proposed such a reform of the University, but the war had delayed carrying out its recommendations and these had then been revised markedly by a Departmental Committee appointed by the Minister of Education in 1924. Differences of opinion in Parliament concerned the effects on London University's program of external degrees which might result from the proposed reorganization of the University's administrative structure. On this issue, however, the sides did not form along party lines, and the external-degree faction defending the status quo was easily outvoted.<sup>31</sup>

The other university bills which were passed after 1919 were so uncontroversial that most of them took up only a few columns of *Hansard Debates*. Principal among these were: the Universities and Colleges (Estates) bill, 1925; the University of Durham bill, 1934; the Universities and Colleges (Emergency) bill, 1939; the Universities and Colleges (Trust) bill, 1943; and the Sheffield University Compulsory Land Purchase bill, 1947.

There remains to be considered the use made of the Parliamentary Questions period regarding the universities. One finds a light but steady sprinkling of enquiries over the entire period from 1919 to the present, covering all aspects of the U.G.C.'s organization and functions. These questions dealt, for example, with the amount of national funds to be granted the universities; the manner in which they were to be granted; the relationship of these to the support of higher education by local authorities; the allegedly less-than-proportionate share of grants awarded to universities in Scotland and Wales; the composition of the U.G.C.; the U.G.C.'s possible bias in favor of Oxford and Cambridge; and the U.G.C.'s distribution of nonrecurrent grants. In addition, there were numerous questions in the decade 1947–1957 which raised points connected with the Public Accounts Committee recommendations con-

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 165 (1923), col. 1891, and Vol. 166 (1923), cols. 2736 ff.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 165 (1923), col. 1847.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 199 (1926), col. 2113.

cerning the U.G.C. Early in this period, many enquiries were made about the state scholarship program and its relationship to the awards of local authorities. More recently, several Members of Parliament queried the Government about the state's role in the raising of university tuition fees. Finally, Question Time has been used to challenge the alleged political activities of some university teachers and administrators,<sup>32</sup> and also to urge the desirability of a royal commission on the role of the universities in modern society.<sup>33</sup>

On the basis of these questions and the answers given to them, and of parliamentary performance in connection with university legislation, two generalizations can be offered about party behavior on issues in higher education. First, a distinction should always be made between the attitudes occasionally evidenced by some disgruntled "back-bencher" (a party member without official responsibilities) and the official position of the formal party leadership. For instance, although a few right-wing Conservatives have chafed somewhat at seeing Communists openly allowed to teach at British schools and universities, the Conservative Party leadership has always steadfastly refused to interfere.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, while some back-bench Labourites have sometimes urged that the state intervene more forcefully in university affairs,<sup>35</sup> the official party position is indicated by this explanation by Lord Attlee of his stand on the issue of state influence:

When I was in office, I steadily refused to try to increase the influence of the State on the universities. I know the objection heard that it is quite illogical to set up a body, . . . give [it] money, and then do nothing to control it. . . . There are matters in which I think it is better to have trust and I think this is one of them.<sup>36</sup>

Second, and most important, in spite of the parties' bitter differences over "comprehensive schools" and the status of "public schools," there is very little to distinguish one front bench from the other in the matter of university education. The only possible exceptions to this general accord have to do with the respective attitudes of Labourites and Conservatives concerning the growing problem of technological education and the desirability of a royal commission on the universities.

Although endorsing the appointment of a royal commission has not yet become an official part of the Labour Party's stand on the univer-

<sup>32</sup> See above, p. 158.

<sup>33</sup> See above, p. 88.

<sup>34</sup> See, for example, p. 158.

<sup>35</sup> Mrs. Leah Manning, for example, when pressing in 1946 for faster action on shortages of accommodation and university staff, asked the Treasury spokesman, "Does he not think as one of the largest contributors among those who pay the piper, he has some right to call the tune?" *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, 5th ser., Vol. 421 (1946), col. 1101.

<sup>36</sup> *Parl. Deb. (Lords)*, 5th ser., Vol. 203 (1957), cols. 1125-1126.

sities, the fact that this action has been urged at least four times between 1952 and 1957 by Labour Members of Parliament<sup>27</sup> (on one occasion by the Shadow Minister of Education) would seem to indicate that a new royal commission might be forthcoming were Labour to gain power. The Conservatives, on the other hand, have consistently rejected these proposals.<sup>28</sup> Of course, it should be quickly noted that the appointment of a royal commission, far from being an act of partisanship, is designed for the express purpose of removing the subject under consideration from the stresses of politics. Thus, in mentioning this as a possible point of difference between the parties, I do not intend to imply that Labour's stand is necessarily a partisan one.

In connection with technology there are, however, the seeds of real political conflict, since the question of technical education and its status in and out of the universities is related to issues of "social equality" and "parity of esteem," about which Labour has strong feelings. The implications of this possible subject of discord between the parties will be considered further below.

#### POSSIBLE CHANGES IN PRESENT UNIVERSITY-STATE RELATIONS

The future validity of the conclusion that state influences have not yet operated to damage the essential attributes of university autonomy seems, therefore, to be contingent on the sustained exclusion of university affairs from partisan politics, the avoidance of a major financial disaster, and the continued mutual sympathy and understanding between the principal officials in government and those in the universities. The question which now arises is, "What type of national development could alter these conditions?" Until the social sciences can provide us with more accurate predictive tools, any answer to this question must remain speculative. The following comment is offered in that spirit, more as an example of what *might* happen than of what necessarily or even probably *will* happen.

A look at contemporary Britain reveals that men of affairs in most areas of public life are troubled by the question whether the British plans to expand technological education are of sufficient scope to meet the challenge of world-wide industrial competition. This question involves not only economic factors such as balanced budgets and "dollar gaps," but basic social and cultural values as well, and for this reason pessimists are saying that the degree and speed of change required is so great as to constitute a practical demand for transformation in *kind* rather than merely in degree.

<sup>27</sup> See above, p. 88.

<sup>28</sup> *Loc. cit.*

Such dark prophecies may seem strange when uttered about the economic future of Britain, since she, after all, was the first to pass through the Industrial Revolution. But there is a disadvantage in being first, for the second round of technical change tends to make the pioneers old-fashioned<sup>30</sup> unless they have constantly adapted their facilities and methods to new developments. This continuous adjustment has certainly not occurred in Britain, where tradition has been more highly regarded than change. The make-up of the universities and of the "public schools," the distribution of fellowships and scholarships, the proportion of students majoring in various subjects, and the academic backgrounds of leading figures in government and the Civil Service—all reflect the social supremacy of the liberal arts which has prevailed in Britain since the Renaissance. While it is true that, as mentioned in chapter vi,<sup>31</sup> great efforts have recently been made by the government to expand technological education both in the universities and in the technical colleges, it is also true, as was pointed out, that this initiative has not been crowned with more than moderate success.

An anonymous article in the *New Statesman and Nation* has argued that such efforts will not bear real fruit until the "climate of culture" has changed. It contended that the

...present culture is...unscientific. It is also in part anti-scientific....[The people who form it] would like, impelled by the best of intentions,...to keep the present culture intact and tag on a kind of annex of professional science and engineering. They want the annex to be as large as need be, so long as it remains an annex. They want it to keep in the background and just earn the country its living.... The problem [cannot] be solved like that....

The present climate seeps mildly round us,...it has considerable charm... [and] much value. Nevertheless, the first virtue of a society is to be able to survive. If the price of survival is to change our culture, most of us as individuals would pay more than that.

It is very difficult to alter radically a pattern of education as complex, as deeply rooted, as intricate in its class structure, as ours.... It may turn out to be impossible to make a deep educational change in time. But we ought to know what will happen if we do not.

...the Russians [in going all out for science] may have made an active misjudgement; alternatively we [in desiring to keep it as an annex] may be making a passive one. But the penalties attaching to the two misjudgements are not the

<sup>30</sup> This observation (along with several others on this and the following page) was taken from an anonymous article in the *New Statesman and Nation*, "New Minds for a New World," Vol. 52, No. 1330 (1956), pp. 279-282. The article, quoted by four Noble Lords in the course of one debate in the upper house, is rumored to have been written by C. P. (now Sir Charles) Snow, eminent novelist with a scientific background. Cf. his articles in the *Sunday Times*, March 10 and 17, 1957.

<sup>31</sup> See above, p. 93.

same. If the Russians are wrong, their penalty is a surplus of scientists. If we are wrong, our penalty is industrial ruin, . . . not in the remote future but in the next twenty years.<sup>41</sup>

In this study we are not specifically concerned with the relative advantages or disadvantages of such a cultural transformation. The complex subject is introduced here merely to show three ways in which the general conditions supporting the maintenance of present university-state relations might be altered. In the first place, as numerous commentators from all parts of the political spectrum have noted,<sup>42</sup> Britain's ultimate financial stability—and hence her university-state relations—may hinge on the question whether industry and science get the required number and quality of recruits.

Secondly, it seems likely that a widespread technological revolution would ultimately be reflected in a Civil Service more largely composed of technologists, who would not necessarily share with the universities the set of common values alluded to earlier (p. 167). Much would depend on how technological education and the technical colleges had been treated by the universities; if some of the present university condescension were to continue, one could easily imagine that the "mutual accommodation" between key personnel of the universities and of the state would become less mutual. I found even some of the present occupants of one government scientific office to be fairly intolerant of what they considered to be the old-fashioned habits of thought of the universities.

Finally, embedded in the general problem of the academic status of technology are controversial issues which could bring some university affairs squarely into national politics. In the first place, the party differences over secondary education might, because of the issue of technology, extend to higher education. Labour now charges that the promise of the coalition-sponsored Education Act of 1944 of "parity of esteem" among grammar, technical, and "modern" secondary schools has not been realized, and that the academic and social supremacy of the grammar schools (which, with the "public schools," have a near-

<sup>41</sup> Anonymous article in the *New Statesman and Nation*, cited in note 39, above, pp. 281, 282, 279, and 280 (I have transposed the order).

<sup>42</sup> Lord Salisbury, for example, when Lord President of the Council, contended in rather dramatic terms: "This is a matter of life and death for us. . . . It has become increasingly clear that on the quality of our scientists and technologists . . . depends quite simply whether we can maintain the exports without which we cannot feed ourselves or maintain our standard of living at all." As quoted, with approval, by Lord Simon, *Parl. Deb. (Lords)*, 5th ser., Vol. 200 (1956), col. 426. Variations of this same sentiment have been expressed by, among others, the following: Lord Chorley, *ibid.*, Vol. 200 (1956), col. 473; Sir Anthony Eden, see above, p. 101; R. A. Butler, *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, 5th ser., Vol. 441 (1946), col. 667; also in *Times Educational Supplement*, June 21, 1957; and by Sir Winston Churchill in the *Manchester Guardian*, December 6, 1955.

monopoly on university entry) tends to separate the country into "two nations."<sup>11</sup> Labour remains skeptical about the efficacy of steps taken by recent Conservative Governments to establish an "alternate ladder" (see p. 71) to social and economic success. The new progression, from technical or modern school to technical college, and from there with a *diploma* into engineering, will never, they protest, equal the appeal of the older one: from grammar (or "public") school to university, and from there with a *degree* into the professions.

Just as Labour has made demands, supported by both educational and social arguments, that all types of state secondary education" be offered together in "comprehensive schools," so it is conceivable that, seeking greater numbers of technical students and disliking in principle the social distinctions between degrees and diplomas, Labour might expand into a major political issue its present demand that advanced technical colleges be allowed to award degrees.<sup>12</sup>

Furthermore, some members of the Labour Party have shown themselves less patient than their Conservative opponents with what they consider to be<sup>13</sup> the slow pace of technological expansion *within* the

<sup>11</sup> "Different types of schools with different leaving ages would become... (schools) with superior or inferior social status, and different exit ramps leading to different and exclusive levels of adult society." Mr. Swingler, M.P., *Times Educational Supplement*, September 30, 1956. For examples of Labour's position on "parity of esteem" and comprehensive schools, see *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, 5th ser., Vol. 441 (1946), cols. 729 ff.; Vol. 477 (1950), cols. 1887 ff.; Vol. 491 (1950), cols. 227 ff.; and Vol. 518 (1952), cols. 76 ff.

<sup>12</sup> Labour's attitude towards the so-called "public schools" is not considered here.

<sup>13</sup> The words "major political issue" should be emphasized, for already the awarding of university degrees for three years' work in advanced technology has been advocated in Parliament. It has not yet become a major political issue, however. Most recently the proposal was persistently and forcefully advanced throughout the whole Commons debate on technical education in June, 1956, and occasionally mentioned in the Lords' debate on engineering and scientific education in November, 1956. Labour speakers, supported by some back-bench Conservatives, urged that the colleges of advanced technology be freed from the control of local authorities, raised in status, given better facilities, and linked with near-by universities.

At the end of the Commons debate, Mr. Stewart, Labour's Shadow Minister of Education, pressed R. A. Butler for the Government's answer on the issue: "Every speaker in the debate except the Minister has expressed the view that the highest technical award should be called a degree. Will the right honourable Gentleman at least indicate that the Government will now consider the matter?"

Mr. Butler replied, "... it is not for the Government to decide... all we can do is see whether this system will grow... into university status, and to give it every opportunity to develop." *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, 5th ser., Vol. 554 (1956), col. 1764. For other speakers' views on this subject, see *ibid.*, cols. 1687, 1695, 1735, and 1748. In the debate in the House of Lords, such opinions may be found at: *Parl. Deb. (Lords)*, 5th ser., Vol. 200 (1956), cols. 461, 491, 482, and 489.

<sup>14</sup> It is important to note that there may be differences between what the universities have actually accomplished by way of technological expansion and what the general public, especially Labour sympathizers, *think* they have achieved. "Justice must not only be done; it must be known to be done." Comments on the inadequate public relations programs of the universities will be offered in the concluding chapter of this study.



universities, and more pressure might be forthcoming in that regard."

As things now stand, many Labour supporters see the universities, Oxford and Cambridge in particular, as bastions of the humanities and therefore as hostile to the development of technological education. This identification, be it right or wrong, has occasioned criticisms such as the two following:

The universities are to remain the home of untainted learning, where "carefully selected students" — i.e. non-bananausie youths—will be "put through high intellectual discipline" — i.e. three years of non-bananausie leisure activities. These will not include technical students, who will be segregated in "splendid places" where such elementary needs of higher education as a library have to be officially "required" [by the Ministry of Education]. The secondary modern school has found its "top," and the grammar schools and universities may continue to devote themselves to the contemplation of their own "pure character."<sup>17</sup>

I do not think that the technical colleges have had a square deal over the last few years... The universities have been stonewalling against the technical colleges...<sup>18</sup>

Labour's ultimate attitude toward the universities will probably depend upon the latter's reactions to the issues just discussed. The Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, as the unofficial spokesman for university opinion, has taken no formal stand on these issues as yet, and seems to be proceeding cautiously. As one member expressed it to me,

The problem on any potentially explosive issue is to decide whether to remain detached and thereby possibly allow unfavourable results to occur, which might have been prevented by forceful intervention; or to throw the full weight of university opinion into a controversial sphere of debate and possibly drag the universities into partisan politics.

Although there has been, then, no formal university stand on the questions mentioned above, one can, on the basis of information from various sources, form a general idea of what the present position generally is.

For instance, on the conferring of degrees by advanced technical colleges, the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee, sponsored by the House of Commons, hoped for a change in university opinion.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, the speech of Sir Hugh Linstead: "We may have to face the fact that even at the expense of deliberately distorting university education, for the sake of our salvation, we may have to devote more and more of our university talent to scientific and technological work... The universities will fail in their task to the nation if they do not reorient their ideas." *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, 5th ser., Vol. 518 (1952), col. 97; see also Vol. 554 (1956), col. 1708; and also *Parl. Deb. (Lords)*, 5th ser., Vol. 200 (1956), cols. 491, 482, and 489.

<sup>18</sup> Peter Caton, Letter to the Editor, *Times Educational Supplement*, May 25, 1956, p. 715.

<sup>19</sup> James Johnson, M.P., *Parl. Deb. (Commons)*, Vol. 474 (1950), col. 2029.

There still appear to be objections in some university quarters to proposals that even a limited number of selected technological colleges should be entitled to award degrees. . . . But we hope such views can now be modified in the national interest since it is abundantly clear that an adequate supply of students for the colleges will never be forthcoming unless they and their parents are satisfied on this score.<sup>50</sup>

Regarding the expansion of technological faculties within the universities, *The Observer* reported:

The Government's plans for extending technical education are causing some anxiety in university circles. . . . The older universities are afraid that this influx of technologists may swamp their humanistic tradition, and that the distinction of holding a university degree will suffer if the technical colleges are to award something of equal rank.<sup>51</sup>

Sir Eric Ashby addressed himself to this problem in discussing before the Home Universities Conference "The Impact on the Universities of the Government's Policy for the Expansion of Technological Education." In pointing out the changing status of the arts faculties, he put his finger perhaps on a major source of anxiety within the universities:

In the past [over and above their "pure" functions of scholarship and training scholars] the arts faculties' bread-and-butter line has been to train civil servants and teachers; but the government's policy for expanding technological education may well result in a good deal of that bread-and-butter line being shifted into other faculties.<sup>52</sup>

The universities may ultimately have to choose the lesser of two evils. If they decide to keep the technical colleges at arm's length and to oppose their development toward more equal status, there will be a further drawing apart between the "few" with a university education and what will be the increasing "many" with a technical college background. Were this cleavage to become too great, a social upheaval might occur, directed against the universities in general and the arts faculties in particular.<sup>53</sup>

Yet if, as some urge, the universities choose the alternative and agree to establish organic links with the technical colleges, the increasing money and emphasis which the government is giving to technical education may create a situation of the tail (or, if you will, the annex) wagging the dog.

The Conservative position on these issues is somewhat ambivalent.

<sup>50</sup> As quoted by M. Stewart, *ibid.*, Vol. 554 (1956), col. 1647.

<sup>51</sup> *The Observer* (Editorial), March 27, 1956.

<sup>52</sup> Sir Eric Ashby, in Home Universities Conference, *Report of the Proceedings* (1956), p. 72.

<sup>53</sup> See an article speculating on this possibility, "Engineers and General Education," *Times Educational Supplement*, August 3, 1956, p. 1003.

On the one hand, since the Conservatives are as anxious as Labour for Britain to close the "dollar gap" and to compete successfully in the international market, and since they are perhaps even more anxious than their opponents to develop the material means of putting the "Great back in Britain,"<sup>54</sup> they can be expected to give widespread support to the continued expansion of technical education. As has been pointed out in chapter vi, Conservative Governments since 1951 have undertaken numerous measures to enlarge and improve technical education at both the university and technical college levels. Increased national funds have been allotted to university and technical college building programs for this purpose; and the Ministry of Education has issued circulars to the local authorities urging them not only to grant the local technical colleges maximum freedom, but also to help them expand their offerings in the liberal arts, and to provide as many facilities such as good libraries, student unions, and halls of residence, as possible.<sup>55</sup> In addition, Lord Hailsham, when Minister of Education, pleaded for a "more intimate partnership between those concerned with university and higher technical education." The universities, he said, had a tradition of excellence which they should not be allowed to keep to themselves.<sup>56</sup> Clearly, then, the Conservatives, notwithstanding certain undoubted cultural reservations, are for practical reasons ready to go a great distance down the road toward a major transformation of British society.

On the other hand, just how far along this course the Conservatives would be willing to travel may depend upon the attitudes of the universities; for the Conservatives, as the self-styled protectors of these institutions and guarantors of their independence from the state, might be reluctant to push technological expansion to its limits in the face of emphatic opposition from the universities. In such a case, the Conservative and Labour positions would conflict and Britain might once again witness lively parliamentary debates over university affairs.

Whether stemming from the problem of technology or some other equally delicate and complex issue, the reëmergence of university education as a subject of partisan politics would probably affect university-state relations. If this happened, the assertions in the last chapter regarding university autonomy would have to be reëxamined in the light of the new situation.

<sup>54</sup> There are many statements by Conservative leaders along these lines. See, for example, Sir Anthony Eden's speech, quoted above, p. 101; and Sir David Eccles' statement (when Minister of Education) that Britain would have to improve her educational system radically "if we wish to keep Britain a great Power." *Times Educational Supplement*, February 8, 1957.

<sup>55</sup> Ministry of Education, Circulars 305 (June 21, 1956) and 323 (May 13, 1957).

<sup>56</sup> *Times Educational Supplement*, June 7, 1957.

## CONCLUSION

THE PROBLEM of relations between universities and the state is becoming increasingly significant in most democratic countries. Growing state involvement in university finances is everywhere present or impending;<sup>1</sup> and the Sputnik era has tended to magnify even further the universities' importance to the nation. Although the university-state relations described in this study relate primarily to the unique British circumstances in which all the universities are *de jure* private institutions, many of the theoretical and *de facto* political problems remain the same whether the universities are public or private. The central question which forms the background of most of these problems is: "What may a community legitimately ask of its universities?"

At a conference held on this general topic in 1933, Dr. Ernest Wilkins, President of Oberlin College, offered one answer. A university, he said, must not only, like other private corporations, ensure that its wares are sound, fairly priced, and of the quality represented; it must also sense "a deeper obligation . . . to be responsive to . . . [and] to work and plan with constant reference to social needs and opportunities, present and future."<sup>2</sup>

Such a prospect is abhorrent, however, to people like Michael Oakeshott, Professor of Political Science at the London School of Economics, who see as its logical consequence the egalitarian demand "... that the university should move step for step with the world, at the same speed, and partaking in every eccentricity of the world's fashion, refusing nothing that is offered, responsive to every suggestion." Oakeshott concedes that "in the long run" the universities will always more or less reflect the world in which they exist; but he insists that they not yield to outside pressures which would entail for them "a loss of identity."<sup>3</sup>

To Sir William Hamilton, the nineteenth-century exponent of university reform,<sup>4</sup> state interference with the universities appeared less as a

<sup>1</sup> "Because of the nature of our contemporary world and society, the inevitable trend in most countries . . . has been towards a greater dependence on and participation by government in respect of university finances and revenues. . . . This dependence is likely to continue." Dr. N. A. M. MacKenzie, President of the University of British Columbia, in "Government and the Universities," in Seventh Congress of the Universities of the Commonwealth, *Report of the Proceedings* (1953), p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> New York University, Conference of Universities, *The Obligations of Universities to the Social Order* (1933), pp. 84-86.

<sup>3</sup> Michael Oakeshott, "The Universities," *Cambridge Journal*, 2 (1949), 523.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 27.

threat to their sense of identity than as a means of helping them to help themselves:

A university is a trust confided by the state to certain hands for the common interest of the nation; nor has it ever heretofore been denied that a university may, and ought, by the state to be from time to time corrected, reformed, or recast, in conformity to accidental changes of relation, and looking towards an improved accomplishment of its essential ends.<sup>2</sup>

A much less favorable view of the role of the state in university affairs was taken by John MacMurray, Professor of Philosophy at St. Andrews University. According to him, since knowledge and learning are inherently human and international in scope, "a university can only serve its community by serving humanity. . . . If it were to adopt an exclusively national outlook or to become the servant of a merely national policy, it would betray the nation it thought to serve."<sup>3</sup>

In writing on the general problem of the state and private associations, Lord Lindsay of Birker has offered one theoretical answer to the question of the respective rights of the state and the universities. Distinguishing between "society" and the "state," Lord Lindsay envisages the latter as merely one of many social institutions serving the former; however, because it is the most powerful and one of the most inclusive of the social institutions, the state is assigned the function which Bosanquet has termed "operative criticism"—namely, the general scrutiny of society for the purpose of resolving disharmonies and conflicts which result when men with limited perspectives and loyalties work in groups with limited purposes.<sup>4</sup> According to this analysis, then, the state is not a higher type of institution than a university, but it does have the right to see that university policies are in general harmony with the basic needs of society.

J. D. Mabbott, in a closely reasoned work entitled *The State and the Citizen*, has attempted to delineate more detailed criteria for valid state intervention. He contends that, aside from essential state control in matters of criminal and civil law and the maintenance of peace and order, private associations should be autonomous in all instances except those in which *only* state regulation can achieve the desired ends. This

<sup>2</sup> Sir William Hamilton, *Discussions on Philosophy and Literature, Education and University Reform* (2d ed., 1853), p. 538.

<sup>3</sup> John MacMurray, "The Functions of a University," *Political Quarterly*, 15 (1944), 277. Dr. Julian Huxley of UNESCO has called attention to other supranational problems of universities: those connected with religious universities (such as the Islamic University in Cairo, Egypt) and with universities controlled by groups outside the national borders (such as the American University in Beirut, Lebanon). In "Relations of the State and the Universities," in Sixth Congress of the Universities of the Commonwealth, *Report of the Proceedings* (1948), p. 40.

<sup>4</sup> A. D. Lindsay, *The Modern Democratic State* (1913), p. 245.

seems satisfactorily definite, but then Mabbott opens a veritable Pandora's box of qualifications by adding: "unless it is shown in any particular case that state action achieves a certain end better than voluntary combination." This clause—and particularly the word "better"—so oversimplifies the complex relationship between state and university that the yardstick he has given is robbed of most of its value. At the very least, the statement should be expanded to read: "unless it is shown . . . that state action achieves a certain end *so much better than voluntary combination that the damage to the private associations involved is more than compensated for by the increased general good.*" This concept, if amended, would imply that state intervention in university affairs would be legitimate either (1) when only state action could accomplish the goal, or (2) when national intervention could produce results that seemed to justify the inevitable damage to university autonomy.

The foregoing analysis suggests that theoretical approaches to the central question do not lead to any clear-cut or automatic directives on the proper times for, or amount of, national interference with universities. On the contrary, the evolution of university-state relations over the past century indicates that governments have increasingly been guided in such matters by material imperatives rather than by abstract principles. A kind of geopolitical law, by which highly planned states tend to "drive out" less planned ones,<sup>8</sup> has made internal conditions in most states more subject than ever before to the pressures of external movements and events, thus limiting the choices in such domestic matters as education. Even in the nineteenth century, the intrinsic desirability of lessening poverty, ignorance, and disease had already prompted many democratic states to move a considerable distance away from the laissez-faire pole; but the trend toward state planning was given its greatest impetus by the immense problems of a series of economic depressions and World War I, and was finally capped by the climactic struggle of World War II and its uneasy aftermath. Such a vast increase in state power could have come only at the expense of many of the private associations which had earlier enjoyed relative freedom in their respective spheres of operation. The "pluralist state"—though by no means yet "singular"—has become much less "plural."

<sup>8</sup> J. D. Mabbott, *The State and the Citizen* (1952), p. 126.

<sup>9</sup> Critics of the totally planned state claim, of course, that in the long run the power of spiritual values and creative liberties in pluralist states will prevail over "efficient tyranny"; but this study must recognize the fact that the short-run danger of economic decline and/or military defeat has forced the Western democracies to accept a compromise between planning and laissez faire which is much closer to the former than it would otherwise have been. See, for example, E. H. Carr, *The Soviet Impact on the Western World* (1947).

Of the state's changing relations with various private associations, none have become more complex than those with the universities. For although the government has had an equal or even greater interest in the conduct of various associations within, for instance, industry, labor, and agriculture, none of these can maintain with as much justification as the universities that continuing state regulation is antipathetic to their true functioning.

Admittedly, institutions like the churches and the press can attach equal urgency to their demands for freedom from state domination," but they nevertheless do not have the same direct bearing on national survival and prosperity as do the universities. It is, thus, a paradox that in the case of the universities, the state is dealing with an extremely sensitive type of association which must not be too closely supervised, but whose work is so vital to the nation that it must somehow be harmonized with the over-all objectives of national planning." This, then, is the general context in which the British governmental actions affecting the universities must be judged.

The historical sections of this study have indicated that in earlier centuries, before the rise of scientific warfare or totalitarian oppo-

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, J. N. Figgis' classic study, *Churches in the Modern State* (1913).

<sup>11</sup> It is interesting to note that two prominent figures in Britain have both advanced analogies of university-state relations, neither of which embodies satisfactorily the paradox described above. (To be fair, neither was probably intended to be examined too critically.) Sir Walter Moberly, chairman of the University Grants Committee during the crucial years between 1935 and 1949, has written that university-state relations resemble less those between consumer and producer than those between patron and artist. "The cogency of the maxim [He who pays the piper calls the tune] varies with the piper. If you are engaging Toscanini and his orchestra, you will do well to leave to him the major voice in deciding the programme." Moberly, *The Crisis in the University* (1949), pp. 239, 229.

R. A. Butler, Chancellor of the Exchequer between 1951 and 1955 and well known for his penchant for analogies, called attention to the need "for a garden of learning . . . where thought is uninhibited and all orthodoxies are strictly questioned. . . . The university's task is to cultivate its own garden, and the state's to supply the manure in useful form and quantities and to ask for the fruits in due season, not to pull up the plants by the root before they flower." In "Government and the Universities," in Seventh Congress of the Universities of the Commonwealth, *Report of the Proceedings* (1953), p. 28.

While Sir Walter's use of the Toscanini analogy correctly stresses that the best results in creative spheres usually emerge in the absence of outside coercion, its musical context does not adequately express the urgency of the state's interest in the universities. After all, no lasting damage would result if a "patron" were forced to listen to Schoenberg when he would prefer to hear Brahms, whereas a state getting a stream of historians when it wanted scientists might feel compelled to take remedial action.

On the other hand, while Mr. Butler's gardening analogy reflects more accurately, perhaps, the universities' importance in a nation that must import more than half of its food, his conclusion that the state could rid itself of all concern for the type, quality, and quantity of "fruit" produced is not justified by the facts.

nents,<sup>12</sup> the British state could and did allow a very high degree of autonomy to the universities—especially since the universities then had no monopoly, as they now seem to have, on the production of advanced thinkers in the field of science. A number of commentators have noted that in the universities' "worst century," the eighteenth, many of the foremost men of science, and of letters as well, functioned outside the universities.

Before the eighteenth century the state had, of course, felt constrained to intervene occasionally in some aspects of university life, particularly those relating to religious orthodoxy. But these interventions had never assumed the character of continuing supervision, and since the religious and political settlement of 1689, the universities had enjoyed a century and a half of almost absolute liberty. That is why, when the government in the nineteenth century tried to correct the abuses which had meanwhile gained a foothold in the universities, the latter made such an outcry against alleged state trespasses on private rights. But the mid-century Royal Commissions on Oxford and Cambridge Universities clearly established the fact that the universities were "national institutions," in the sense that they had certain minimum obligations to the state which the state had a right to compel them to meet, by *force majeure* if necessary.

Since that time the issue has become mainly one of redefining the content of these minimum obligations and of refining the techniques for ensuring their fulfillment. The inception in 1889 of small state grants to the modern English and Welsh universities, the subsequent increase in the scale of these awards, the formation in 1919 of the University Grants Committee, and the inclusion of Oxford and Cambridge on the grant list in 1923—all these things merely tended to bring the universities to the state's continuing attention sooner than might otherwise have been the case; for the grants were the occasion and not the cause of the state's increased concern with the universities. One might say that if the grants had not been needed they would have had to be invented, for no one can seriously contend that even if the universities were at this moment independently wealthy, the contemporary state would be able to forego efforts to integrate their activities into the framework of national planning.

The U.G.C. has been, therefore, merely the felicitous instrument whereby government planning could be effectively coördinated with

<sup>12</sup> Frederick I and Napoleon, to be sure, made wide use of "planning," but neither had at his disposal the total means which have been available to more recent autocrats.



state aid to universities. There is little doubt but that the universities' "coöperation" has been somewhat accelerated by the U.G.C.'s financial sanction, but were this weapon not there, some political sanction would surely have replaced it. Such an interpretation naturally raises the question, "Would some other type of state policy toward the universities have been better than the one employed, which leaned so heavily on the U.G.C.?"

It is widely acknowledged that "academic freedom, like virtue, is the permanent object of appreciative and solicitous clichés." It may therefore be permissible for me to contribute a slightly distorted one in asserting that the present system of university-state relations is, to paraphrase Dr. Pangloss, "the best of all possible systems" in the British world as it is today. It is important to stress the qualification "possible," for under other conditions, one could have proposed a more appealing ideal than the present tenuous balance of forces described in preceding chapters. However, given the universities' relative poverty and the state's need to mobilize vital resources to maintain economic and military strength, no other system could have done what the present system has accomplished—namely, integrated university operations into the framework of national planning without damaging the essential attributes of university autonomy.<sup>12</sup>

Some people had hoped that the universities themselves could undertake the task of coördinating their policies with those of the nation. For example, Sir John Anderson (now Lord Waverly), Churchill's Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1944–45, after admonishing the universities to "regard themselves no longer as isolated units, but rather as parts of an articulated whole [whose] activities must be coördinated in the interests of efficiency and economy of effort," stated that "the responsibility for this coördination should be placed upon the universities themselves through the appropriate organs of collaboration."<sup>13</sup>

However, although "the voluntary way is the British way," and although the British universities have, on their own initiative, taken many forward steps (in particular, the enhancement of the coördinating role of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals<sup>14</sup>), nearly everyone will now agree that the major task of coördination belongs to the state. This is particularly true as long as the state acts primarily

<sup>12</sup> "The universities are being nationalised in the sense that they must operate within the frame of reference of national planning. So far there is much evidence of the power of the State, but virtually none that it has been misused." *The Times*, November 6, 1952.

<sup>13</sup> Sir John Anderson, "Universities and the State," *Universities Quarterly*, 1 (1946), 13.

<sup>14</sup> See above, p. 90.

through the U.G.C., with its predominantly academic membership. As was seen in earlier pages, the Vice-Chancellors' Committee itself issued a Note in 1946 welcoming more definite state guidance channeled through the U.G.C.;<sup>16</sup> and later, members of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals testified before the Select Committee on Estimates that they did not consider themselves, as representatives of the various universities, to be the proper persons to sit on a national coördinating committee with public powers.<sup>17</sup>

Furthermore, it is perhaps expecting too much to ask the universities to engage voluntarily in continuous self-examination and self-reform, since academicians seem to share the normal human frailties:

It is... too true that the possessors of vested interests in knowledge, as in material things, tend to fight furiously against those who would introduce a new order. Anyone who has considered the history of universities must have come to the conclusion that in these matters they are no exceptions to the general rule.<sup>18</sup>

Therefore, the University Grants Committee appears to have been the best possible means of reconciling the conflicting claims of national needs and university autonomy. That the U.G.C. could not itself have treated the universities more liberally than it has is indicated by the heavy pressure brought to bear by the Public Accounts Committee for closer governmental supervision of university expenditures.<sup>19</sup>

One of the chief values of the U.G.C. is its self-restraint; it tries not to invoke more than the minimum power necessary to accomplish its goals, and it relies as much as possible on university efforts. Sir Walter Moberly spoke of this quality in reference to the U.G.C.'s role as catalyst to long-range planning within the universities: "[The Grants Committee] is a stimulating influence, always inciting the universities to plan for themselves somewhat more fully than they might do if they were left to themselves."<sup>20</sup>

The U.G.C. as an administrative device is not without its faults, but these are not crucial, and must, as was stated earlier, be judged

<sup>16</sup> See above, p. 76.

<sup>17</sup> See above, p. 137.

<sup>18</sup> Albert Mansbridge, *The Older Universities of England—Oxford and Cambridge* (1923), pp. 172–173. More recently, a fellow university administrator who was envious of Lord Lindsay's freedom to establish a new type program at North Staffordshire, told him, "Of course, we all want to do that, but you will find that your Professors won't let you." To which Lord Lindsay replied, "Yes, but if you can start with a staff who believe in the experiment, you won't have all those vested interests to grapple with." Letter from Lord Lindsay to W. H. G. Armytage, as quoted in Armytage, *Civic Universities* (1955), p. 292.

<sup>19</sup> See chapter viii, above.

<sup>20</sup> Sir Walter Moberly, in "Relations of the State and the Universities," in Sixth Congress of the Universities of the Commonwealth, *Report of the Proceedings* (1948), p. 16.

against the background of the possible. Two substantial criticisms which might be made of the Grants Committee concern its potential rigidity in the face of situations requiring unorthodox responses, and its availability as an instrument of possible future abuse, should conditions force a change for the worse in university-state relations.

Regarding the first point, a writer in the *Times Educational Supplement* raised the following queries:

How does a strong committee of the academically orthodox come to a state of mind when it is willing to commit large sums of public money to support an experiment which at the time is academically unorthodox? . . . If Lord Lindsay of Birker had not been a power in the Labour Party, would the University College of North Staffordshire, with its original curriculum, ever have come to the light of day? And if Lord Cherwell had not had the ear of Sir Winston Churchill, would so great a sum have been now devoted to the development of the Imperial College of Science and Technology?<sup>22</sup>

On the basis of its recent policies, one may doubt whether the U.G.C. does in fact suffer from this much rigidity. However, just as in the case of the centralization of funds and hence of power in the Arts Council, which distributes state subsidies to the fine arts,<sup>23</sup> one may nevertheless regret the decline in the number of private sources of financial support for proposals which seem to offer less "safety" than others. The spectre of the Public Accounts Committee demanding its pound of flesh for a costly educational gamble gone wrong is enough to make any public figure think twice.<sup>24</sup> But given the lessening role

<sup>22</sup> *Times Educational Supplement*, February 10, 1956, p. 154.

<sup>23</sup> The Arts Council, which was created after World War II, attempts to do for the realm of the fine arts what the U.G.C. does for the universities, that is, to distribute national grants to institutions (opera companies, symphony orchestras, legitimate theaters, ballet companies) whose clientele is unable to pay the growing costs involved, and which may now no longer rely on wealthy private benefactors to make up the resulting deficits. There are interesting questions of state control in this area which are not entirely dissimilar to those relating to universities. However, in the case of the fine arts, it is even more difficult to determine "national needs" but perhaps less urgent to do so. The Select Committee on Estimates has given some attention to the Arts Council; see above, p. 128, n. 49, and S.C.E. 1948-49, *Nineteenth Report*, H.C. 315.

<sup>24</sup> Raised here is an issue which deserves more extended consideration than can be given within the scope of this study. It concerns the price which may have to be paid in creative spheres (e.g., learning and the fine arts) for the seemingly necessary replacement of "irresponsible" patrons (that is, either wealthy individuals or political regimes which have not had to account publicly for their expenditures) by responsible state support with its utilitarian standards. Let it quickly be stated that the political "irresponsibility" which permitted the creation of such great works of art as the Pyramids and the Palace of Versailles would be completely unacceptable today; on the other hand, one must admit that enlightened millionaires have generally made more desirable patrons than do contemporary democratic states, for with the former, there has been no worry about having to justify an "extravagance" to a practical-minded state legislature. If the state must, out of general necessity, become more and more the major source of support for various endeavors in learning and the arts (currently more true in

of private benefactions in university finances and the necessity to keep university tuition fees low so as not to drive away those students who have no scholarships, there seems to be no alternative to the U.G.C. and its subsidies.

The second possible criticism of the U.G.C. is more significant, for although nearly all the commentators, including myself, stand in admiration of the Grants Committee's present enlightened personnel and practices, the danger must be faced that it has acquired a formidable *potentiality* for power which could be abused in less happy times. The U.G.C.'s broad terms of reference (see above, p. 76) have occasioned both abstract<sup>24</sup> and concrete<sup>25</sup> criticisms since 1945. Sir Walter Moberly has commented on this problem, and his conclusions are in the best tradition of British empiricism:

Undoubtedly the machinery exists by which the State could, if it were so minded, apply almost irresistible financial pressure to the Universities. The basis of confidence is the conviction not that the State cannot but that the State will not want to do so; it rests, in other words, not upon law but upon the convention of the Constitution.

.....

In so far as the actual operation of grants now or later gives cause for anxiety, that is a serious matter, but in so far as forms of words give rise to theoretical questions, I do not think that is a very serious matter.<sup>26</sup>

However, Sir Walter has elsewhere related the problem of possible

Europe than in the United States), it must guard against applying too strictly the flat utilitarian criteria of its other areas of operation.

Albert Mausbridge, a member of the Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge Universities in 1922, has written poignantly of this danger as it relates to higher education: "Though the feature of the later years (at Oxford and Cambridge) has been improved organisation, yet 'the Spirit bloweth where it listeth.' It may fail to flow through the conscientiously organised College where every penny is meticulously accounted for, in which there is no waste, and the Fellows are irreproachably correct in all their ways. That, indeed, is the dread of the reformer who is not devoid of imagination. He is full of constant fear that he may fill up the valleys at the expense of the mountain-tops." Mausbridge, *op. cit.*, p. 283.

<sup>24</sup> Sir James Mountford, Vice-Chancellor of Liverpool University, quoted the expanded terms of reference of the U.G.C. concerning "...the preparation and execution of such plans...as may...be required in order to ensure that they are fully adequate to national needs," and asked uncasily, "Required by whom?" In "Relations of the State and the Universities," in Sixth Congress of the Universities of the Commonwealth, *Report of the Proceedings* (1948), pp. 17-18.

<sup>25</sup> Two members of the Royal Free Hospital of the University of London wrote to *The Times* as follows: "In the [U.G.C.'s] vetoing of the new medical curriculum of the University of London, financial sanctions were used to forbid a policy on academic grounds after it had been authorised by the University Senate and Court and expenditure had been incurred.... We urge that [the Grant Committee's] terms of reference be reconsidered and revised." A. St. George Huggett and E. M. Killick, *The Times*, April 18, 1953.

<sup>26</sup> Moberly, in "Relations of the State and the Universities" (cited in n. 20, above), pp. 17 and 44.

state abuse of the universities to the broader issue of an informed public interest in academic freedom in the universities—which is a very different issue, by the way, from the matter of public indifference toward internal university policies (see p. 169). According to Sir Walter, “the tacit understanding that has hitherto existed between the universities and the governing class must now be extended to a much wider public.”<sup>25</sup> He sees the increasingly representative selection of university students from all grades of society and the universities’ extramural education programs as hopeful harbingers of that more widespread understanding of university objectives.

Dr. D. W. Logan, Principal of the University of London, is not so optimistic on this point:

In the outside world there is, I fear, a great lack of understanding of what the University is, what it stands for and what it does. The responsibility for this sad state of affairs rests largely on the University itself which could justly be accused of going out of its way to hide its light under a bushel. It is vitally necessary that the problems with which the University is faced—and they are many and complex—should be more fully comprehended and the points at issue more clearly grasped than is at present the case.<sup>26</sup>

It is perhaps not necessary to dwell further on this need to interest a wider segment of public opinion than has hitherto been approached, in the broad values of academic freedom; this is one area of the possible, however, where it seems obvious that more could be done in Britain.

Having said this, one must acknowledge that in nearly all other respects the British have done exceedingly well in reconciling the principles of central planning, accountability of public funds, and university autonomy. One cannot but be impressed with the tremendous vitality of contemporary British universities; surely the state leadership of recent decades cannot have been too oppressive.

The question now remains to be answered: “How much of the British pattern is applicable elsewhere?” As was stated in the Introduction, the particular conditions which have contributed to the success of the British system are recognized to be essentially indigenous to the British Isles. However, a conference of European rectors and vice-chancellors found that while the British system would not be appropriate in some nations, the over-all principles of the University Grants Committee constitute “a model which could be followed in many

<sup>25</sup> The Rede Lecture, Cambridge University, November 18, 1948. *The Times* expressed a variation of this same theme: “Academic freedom depends on an informed public opinion which believes that for universities to be left free is right in principle and justified at the same time by the strictest canons of utility.” November 6, 1952.

<sup>26</sup> University of London, *Report by the Principal, 1956-57*, p. 3.

countries."<sup>20</sup> President Dodds of Princeton University has placed the United States among the nations in which the U.G.C. system would not be suitable; the main reasons he gives for this conclusion, over and above the general difference between the dual American system of public and private universities and the unitary system found in Britain,<sup>21</sup> are:

- 1) the wide differences between [Britain and the United States] in respect to popular views as to both the scope and function of the universities; and
- 2) the radical differences between the Treasury and Exchequer systems of the two countries, and the legislative and administrative habits which the two systems reflect.<sup>22</sup>

President Dodds is certainly well qualified to speak on this subject; however, I respectfully suggest that the growing financial problems of most private colleges and universities in the United States may invite attempts to adapt some of the general principles of the British system to the American context—at the state, if not at the national, level.

The general principles in Britain which may serve as guides wherever democracies are required to face similar problems appear to be as follows: The state has a legitimate interest in the over-all policies of the universities, whether these are public or private institutions and whether or not public funds are involved. The universities should form their educational policies with sensitivity for national needs, and, if subsidized by public funds, after consultation with the appropriate governmental offices. In case of disagreement over ends or means between the state and the universities, the universities' judgment should prevail, with the understanding that they have the responsibility of demonstrating the wisdom of their decisions within a reasonable time, and subject always to ultimate political intervention in the face of a major breakdown in higher education. The execution of the subsidized policies should be entirely free from the close state supervision which normally accompanies grants of public funds. And, finally, the state organ which links the universities to the government should be composed primarily—but not exclusively—of

<sup>20</sup> Conference of European University Rectors and Vice-Chancellors, *Report of the Conference* (1955), p. 179.

<sup>21</sup> It might now be argued, on the evidence of the foregoing pages, that the unitary British tradition of *private* universities has been subtly altered, through the University Grants Committee, into a new unitary tradition of *public* universities. In either case, however, the contrast with the dual American system remains.

<sup>22</sup> H. W. Dodds, in "Government and the Universities," in Seventh Congress of the Universities of the Commonwealth, *Report of the Proceedings* (1953), p. 34.

university men who are not only thoroughly familiar with the work and ideals of the universities but also cognizant of the state's broader domestic problems and external responsibilities.

Although the social institutions and traditions of other democracies may preclude their creating exact replicas of the University Grants Committee with its peculiarly informal modes of operation, the general applicability of the principles enumerated above could lead to Britain's ultimately being regarded not only as the home of the Mother of Parliaments, but also as the progenitor of the most enlightened principles of state conduct toward universities.

## APPENDICES



# APPENDIX I

## BRITISH UNIVERSITIES AND UNIVERSITY COLLEGES

### SUMMARY OF BRITISH UNIVERSITIES AND UNIVERSITY COLLEGES AND THEIR AGE, TYPE, AND SIZE

Institution and date of charter	Number of full-time students in 1954-55 <sup>a</sup>
<i>Medieval Foundations (2):</i>	
Oxford, origins in twelfth century . . . . .	7,187
Cambridge, origins in thirteenth century . . . . .	7,934
<i>Nineteenth-Century Federal Foundations (3):</i>	
Durham, 1832 . . . . .	3,915
London, 1836 . . . . .	18,201
Wales, 1893 . . . . .	4,494
<i>Modern English Provincial (Civic) Universities (11):</i>	
Birmingham, 1900 . . . . .	3,135
Manchester, 1903 . . . . .	3,921
Liverpool, 1903 . . . . .	2,919
Leeds, 1904 . . . . .	3,398
Sheffield, 1905 . . . . .	2,010
Bristol, 1909 . . . . .	2,666
Reading, 1926 . . . . .	1,110
Nottingham, 1948 . . . . .	2,066
Southampton, 1952 . . . . .	1,100
Hull, 1954 . . . . .	727
Exeter, 1955 . . . . .	889
Leicester, 1957 . . . . .	638
<i>Scottish Universities (4):</i>	
St. Andrews, 1411 . . . . .	1,820
Glasgow, 1451 . . . . .	4,748
Aberdeen, 1493 . . . . .	1,652
Edinburgh, 1583 . . . . .	4,608
<i>University College Granting Degrees (1):</i>	
North Staffordshire, 1949 . . . . .	533
<i>Technical Colleges Receiving U.G.C. Grants (2):</i>	
Manchester College of Technology, 1955 . . . . .	719
Royal Technical College, Glasgow, 1912 . . . . .	1,315
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>81,705</b>

<sup>a</sup> The enrollment figures are from University Grants Committee, *Returns from Universities and University Colleges for the Year 1954-55*, p. 11.

## APPENDIX II

# THE MAJOR FORMS OF SELF-GOVERNMENT IN BRITISH UNIVERSITIES

THE MODES of internal government in the universities of the United Kingdom may be classified under three general types, as found in the ancient universities, the modern provincial or civic universities, and the University of London.<sup>1</sup> The Welsh and Scottish universities are established on general principles more or less similar, so far as self-government is concerned, to those of the universities in England.<sup>2</sup>

### I. OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITIES

Oxford and Cambridge are unique in two respects. First, they differ sharply from the civic universities in that no outside persons participate in their principal governing bodies; power is entirely in the hands of the academic and administrative staff. Secondly, the individual colleges of which Oxford and Cambridge are composed are themselves almost entirely autonomous bodies. The university government and administration is mainly carried on by the academic staff with the aid of a number of full-time officials occupying subordinate positions. Most business is decided by committees composed of teachers and research workers. There is a great number of these committees dealing with particular matters, since the system depends on the part-time services of men whose chief duties and interests are those of teaching and research.

The typical college at Oxford or Cambridge is an autonomous corporate body governed by the teaching fellows and presided over by the head of the college. Students are admitted to and dismissed from the college by the fellows, who also decide what teaching shall be done. Professors, readers, and lecturers are appointed and paid by the university, which is also responsible for examinations required for degrees.

The principal governing organs of Oxford and Cambridge are several. The formal head is the chancellor, who is an outside dignitary performing purely ceremonial functions. The working head is the vice-chancellor, who is chosen from among the heads of colleges for a short term of two or three years. He presides over most of the important boards or councils. The chief permanent official is the registrar or registry. The principal legislative body, which also approves senior appointments, is called Congregation at Oxford and Regent House at Cambridge. It consists of the entire body of the university teaching and administrative staff. A smaller body, elected by the staff, is responsible for formulating policy and making executive decisions. It is called the Hebdomadal Council at Oxford, and the Council of the Senate at Cambridge. In addition there are a financial board, numerous boards of faculties dealing with studies and examinations in several subjects, and a long series of committees responsible for managing

<sup>1</sup> This information is drawn mainly from the English version of Professor W. A. Robson's article, "Las universidades británicas y el estado," *Nuestro Tiempo*, Vol. 3, No. 22 (April, 1956), pp. 1-23.

<sup>2</sup> See the Commonwealth Universities' *Yearbook*... for 1955, prepared by the Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth. See also S. R. Dongerkery, *Universities in Britain* (1953), pp. 105-106, and 61.

university institutions, such as libraries, museums, and research institutes. A body of great size but small importance (known as Convocation at Oxford and the Senate at Cambridge) consists of the graduates possessing certain degrees. Since the graduates are scattered all over Britain and in many overseas countries, few of them except the teachers of the universities attend the meetings of these general assemblies.

## II. ENGLISH CIVIC UNIVERSITIES

The governments of the English civic universities vary somewhat, but a fairly accurate generalization is possible about the typical organization of their authorities. The ultimate government body is the Court. This is a large assembly (ranging from 136 members at Manchester to more than 500 at Sheffield), a majority of whose members are not on the staff of the university.<sup>3</sup> The executive organ is the Council, a smaller body which is responsible for financial administration under the general supervision of the Court. It also decides senior appointments and other matters delegated to it by the Court. In the Council, as in the Court, the majority of members are outside personages, but the academic staff is represented as well by several of its members.

The chief academic body is the Senate. This body is made up of professors on the staff of the university. It controls academic policy, teaching, examinations, and discipline.

Academic work in the several subjects is organized and supervised by the faculties or boards of faculties, which are composed exclusively of the teaching staff. Convocation and Congregation are organs similar in composition to those found at Oxford with similar titles, but their powers are somewhat different, as these do not include legislative functions.

The vice-chancellor at a modern provincial university is a permanent, full-time executive head of the university, appointed by the Council after consultation with the Senate. The vice-chancellor is usually a professor, but after appointment he relinquishes his teaching and research functions. The chancellor is usually assisted by one or more pro-chancellors, who may deputize for him on ceremonial occasions.

## III. THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

The University of London, which, because of its vast size and scope, is in a class of its own, has thirty-four schools as its principal constituent elements. All these schools and institutions enjoy a substantial degree of autonomy. Each of them is controlled by its own governing organs, which contain an admixture of the teaching staff and outside persons.

The University exercises control over the colleges and other institutions in several ways. First, the University receives the large sums of money provided by the government, and decides how these shall be distributed among the schools. Second, examinations are conducted by the University, which also prescribes the regulations for the various degrees. Third, senior appointments (i.e., appointments

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<sup>3</sup> The Court is usually made up of the university officers, deans, and other academic representatives; Members of Parliament for the region; representatives of learned societies, other universities, and so forth; benefactors who have donated a sum of money equaling or exceeding a certain specified amount; the heads of local schools and colleges, local mayors, bishops and other church leaders, representatives of professions such as law and medicine, leading businessmen and industrialists, and representatives of the municipal councils in the area.

as professors and readers) are made by the University, subject to conditions laid down by it; such appointments are made on the recommendation of a board of advisors containing representatives both of the University and of the school where the professor will be employed, as well as outside experts in the subjects. Fourth, schools are liable to visitation by the University in order that it may obtain reports on their efficiency.

The principal organ of the University of London, except for financial purposes, is the Senate. Its fifty five members include the heads of the nine principal schools; members elected by the faculties; representatives of the Convocation (i.e., the graduates); and a small number of coöpted members, together with the chancellor, vice-chancellor, the chairman of Convocation and the principal. The Court is in control of finance and is a much smaller body. Its seventeen members include representatives of the Senate, and nominees of the Crown and of the London County Council, with the result that University and outside interests are almost evenly balanced. In addition there are faculty boards or committees which cut across the organization of schools and colleges, and it is they who determine the policy of the University in regard to the syllabuses and other requirements for the several subjects falling within the various faculties.

The chancellor and vice-chancellor at London hold positions similar to those at Oxford and Cambridge, and the principal is the permanent chief administrative officer.

# APPENDIX III

## TREASURY GRANTS TO UNIVERSITIES

### RECURRENT AND NONRECURRENT TREASURY GRANTS TO THE UNIVERSITIES IN SELECTED YEARS FROM 1919-20 THROUGH 1961-62

Fiscal year	Recurrent grants	Nonrecurrent grants
1919-20	£ 692,150	£ 372,000
1920-21	798,239	252,000
1923-24	1,207,570	19,000
1928-29	1,535,230	500
1933-34	1,798,350	2,742
1938-39	2,007,900	125,233
1945-46	5,149,000	
1946-47	5,149,000	
1947-48	8,850,455	
1948-49	10,317,775	
1949-50	13,635,470	} 15,000,000 <sup>a</sup>
1950-51	15,222,408	
1951-52	16,600,113	
1952-53	20,000,000	4,439,000
1953-54	21,003,132	5,672,000
1954-55	22,250,000	6,175,000
1955-56	23,500,000	7,539,000
1956-57	25,000,000	4,800,000 <sup>b</sup>
1957-58	30,600,000 <sup>c</sup>	15,400,000 <sup>d</sup>
1958-59	32,300,000 <sup>c</sup>	17,000,000 <sup>d</sup>
1959-60	34,350,000 <sup>c</sup>	17,000,000 <sup>d</sup>
1960-61	36,750,000 <sup>c</sup>	
1961-62	39,500,000 <sup>c</sup>	

<sup>a</sup> Total nonrecurrent grant for the quinquennium 1947-1952; subdivision according to year was not available when these figures were compiled. The sum of £23,000,000 was authorized for this period, but only £15,000,000 could be spent.

<sup>b</sup> This figure is unofficial; it was obtained from the *Manchester Guardian* of November 22, 1956.

<sup>c</sup> The recurrent grants for the years 1957-58 through 1961-62 represent those envisaged in the latest quinquennial announcement made in the Commons, on March 14, 1957, by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, *Manchester Guardian*, March 15, 1957.

<sup>d</sup> The nonrecurrent grants specified were £10,400,000 for 1957-58, £12,000,000 for 1958-59, and £12,000,000 for 1959-60, plus a total of £15,000,000 over the three-year period 1957-1960 for the Imperial College of Technology; the £15,000,000 sum has been prorated over the three years to yield the amounts in the nonrecurrent-grant column, although these may not reflect the actual apportionment by year.

# APPENDIX IV

## SOURCES OF UNIVERSITY INCOME

### ANALYSIS OF UNIVERSITY INCOME FOR SELECTED YEARS SINCE 1920

Year	Total income of universities	Analysis by source, in per cent of total income					
		Parliamentary grants	Grants from Local Authorities	Fees	Endowments	Donations and subscriptions	Other sources
1920-21 . . . . .	£ 3,020,499	33.6	9.3	33.0	11.2	2.7	3.3
1923-24 . . . . .	3,587,366	35.5	12.0	33.6	11.6	2.5	4.8
1928-29 . . . . .	5,174,510	35.9	10.1	27.8	13.9	2.4	6.9
1933-34 . . . . .	5,953,320	35.1	9.2	32.8	13.7	2.4	6.8
1938-39 . . . . .	6,712,067	35.8	9.0	29.8	15.4	2.6	7.4
1946-47 . . . . .	13,043,541	52.7	5.6	23.2	9.3	2.2	7.0
1949-50 . . . . .	22,009,735	63.9	4.6	17.7	5.7	1.7	6.4
1953-54 . . . . .	31,112,024	70.5	3.6	12.0	4.3	1.6	8.0
1955-56 . . . . .	36,894,000	72.7	3.1	10.8	3.8	0.9	8.7 <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> "Other income" in 1955-56 included £1,478,000 from grants for research and £818,000 from income receivable under research contracts.

## THE COMMITTEE OF VICE-CHANCELLORS AND PRINCIPALS: SUBJECTS DISCUSSED IN THE YEAR 1953-54

ELEVEN meetings of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals were held in the year 1953-54. The following summary of the subjects discussed is an excerpt from the *Report of the Executive Council* of the Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth for that year (pp. 7-8):

Examinations in secondary schools—university entrance requirements; new Examining Body for the General Certificate of Education; statistical enquiry into entrance requirements and procedure for admission to Universities raised by Joint Committee of the Four Secondary Associations; questions relating to the selection and maintenance of students raised by National Union of Students; falsification of examination certificates; payment of allowances to medical and dental students by the Ministry of Education; attitude of the National Union of Students to the question of vacation employment; University Grants Committee enquiry as to progress of students; arrangements for the deferment of National Service for students in the academic year 1954-55; supplementation of postgraduate awards; training and supply of graduate teachers; administration of Burnham Award for teachers.

Proposed inspection of university accounts by the Comptroller and Auditor General; Government policy on the development of higher technological education; grants for Adult Education by the Ministry of Education; Charitable Trusts in England and Wales; Government policy on leasehold property; assessment and rating of university buildings; structure of academic salary scales; scheme for supplementing F.S.S.U. pensions to alleviate superannuation hardships; age of retirement for university teachers; submission of Memorandum of Evidence to the Committee of Enquiry into the cost of the National Health Service; payment of Distinction awards; classification of hospitals in relation to pre-registration house experience; capitation fees and student health services; remuneration and conditions of service of university technical staffs; deferment of National Service for junior laboratory technicians; electricity charges to Universities.

Seventh Congress of Universities of the Commonwealth, July 1953; Home Universities Conference, December 1954; A.U.B.C.—Commonwealth Universities Conference in Canada, September 1954; Brussels Treaty Organization—Universities Conferences at The Hague, September 1953, Clermont Ferrand, September 1954, and Rectors' Conference, Cambridge, July 1955; D.S.I.R. Symposium on research organization and management at Nancy, October 1954; BACIE conference on National Service, March 1954; Second Congress of the Universities of Latin America, November 1953; Marshall Scholarships Scheme for American graduate students; Frank Knox Memorial Fellowship for 1954-55; establishment of Inter-University Consultative Committee on Turner and Newall Research Fellowships; Miners' Welfare National Scholarships Scheme; exchange scholarships offered by the State College of Washington; short-term appointments from United Kingdom Universities to Universities in India, Pakistan and Ceylon; recruitment for overseas

appointments; Commonwealth University Interchange Scheme—British Council Travel Grants; higher education in Germany—Rockefeller Interchange Scheme; European Convention on the equivalence of Diplomas leading to admission to Universities.

Compilation by ASLIB of central index to university theses; availability and publication of university thesis literature; King George's Jubilee Trust—Study of influences affecting young people; PEP survey on graduates in industry; proposed conference of university buildings officers; installation of First Chancellor of University of Hull; academic attendance at international congresses; grants to British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem; Greek earthquake appeal; university subscriptions to the British Institute in Paris; memorandum on work of British Universities Film Council.



## APPENDIX VI

# BRITISH UNIVERSITY AND PUBLIC SCHOOL BACKGROUNDS OF MEMBERS OF THREE CABINETS

THE BRITISH university and public school backgrounds of members of three cabinets are given below: the Governments of 1909, 1945, and 1951. This information has been taken from *Who's Who* and the *Dictionary of National Biography* for these years.

### I. THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT OF FEBRUARY, 1909

Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury	H. H. Asquith	Balliol College, Oxford
Lord President of the Council	Viscount Wolverhampton	—
Lord Chancellor	Lord Loreburn	Balliol College, Oxford
Chancellor of the Exchequer	D. Lloyd George	—
Home Secretary	Herbert J. Gladstone	Eton; University College, Oxford
Foreign Secretary	Sir Edward Grey	Winchester; Balliol College, Oxford
Colonial Secretary and Lord Privy Seal	The Earl of Crewe	Harrow; Trinity College, Cambridge
Secretary of the War Office	R. B. Haldane	Edinburgh University
First Lord of the Admiralty	Reginald McKenna	King's College, University of London; Trinity Hall, Cambridge
Secretary of the India Office	Viscount Morley	Lincoln College, Oxford
President of the Board of Education	W. Runciman	—
President of the Board of Trade	Winston Churchill	— (But see 1951 cabinet)
President of the Board of Local Government	John Burns	—
President of the Board of Agriculture	Earl Carrington	—
Postmaster General	Sydney Buxton	—
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	Lord Fitzmaurice	Eton; Trinity College, Cambridge
Secretary for Scottish Affairs	Lord Pentland	—
First Commissioner of Works	L. Harcourt	—

## II. THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT OF OCTOBER, 1945

Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, and First Lord of the Treasury	C. R. Attlee	Haileybury College; University College, Oxford, Hon. Fellow, 1943; Lecturer in Social Science, London School of Economics, 1913-1923
Lord President of the Council	Herbert Morrison	---
Foreign Secretary	Ernest Bevin	
Lord Privy Seal	Arthur Greenwood	Victoria University; Lecturer in Economics, Leeds University
Chancellor of the Exchequer	E. H. J. N. Dalton	Eton; King's College, Cambridge; Lecturer and Reader in Economics, University of London, 1919-1936
President of the Board of Trade	R. Stafford Cripps	Winchester; University College, University of London; Rector, Aberdeen University, 1942-1945
Lord Chancellor	Lord Jowitt	Marlborough; New College, Oxford
First Lord of the Admiralty	A. V. Alexander	—
Home Secretary	J. Chuter Ede	Christ's College, Cambridge
Dominions Secretary	Viscount Addison	Professor of Medicine, London and Sheffield Universities
Secretary of State for India and Burma	Lord Pethwick-Lawrence	Eton; Trinity College, Cambridge
Colonial Secretary	George H. Hall	
Secretary of State for War	J. J. Lawson	---
Secretary of State for Air	Viscount Stansgate	University College, University of London, Fellow
Secretary of State for Scotland	J. Westwood	---
Minister of Labour	George A. Isaacs	---
Minister of Fuel and Power	Emanuel Shinwell	—
Minister of Education	Ellen Wilkinson	Manchester University
Minister of Health	Aneurin Bevan	Central Labour College
Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries	Thomas Williams	—

III. THE CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT OF OCTOBER, 1951

Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, and First Lord of the Treasury	Winston Churchill	Rector, Aberdeen University, 1914-1918; Rector, Edinburgh University, 1929-1932; Chancellor, Bristol University, since 1930; Hon. Fellow, Merton College, Oxford, 1942
Foreign Secretary	Anthony Eden	Eton; Christ Church, Oxford; Chancellor, Birmingham University
Lord President of the Council	Lord Woolton	Manchester University; Chairman, Council of Manchester University
Lord Privy Seal	Marquess of Salisbury	Eton; Christ Church, Oxford; Chancellor, Liverpool University, 1951
Lord Chancellor	Lord Simonds	Winchester; New College, Oxford
Home Secretary	Sir David Maxwell Fyfe	Balliol College, Oxford
Chancellor of the Exchequer	R. A. Butler	Marlborough; Pembroke College, Cambridge, Hon. Fellow, 1941
Secretary of State for the Commonwealth	Lord Ismay	Charterhouse; Sandhurst
Secretary of State for the Colonies	Oliver Littleton	Eton; Trinity College, Cambridge
Secretary of State for Scotland	James Stuart	Eton
Coordinator for Transport, Fuel, and Power	Lord Leathers	
Minister of Health	H. F. C. Crookshank	Eton; Magdalen College, Oxford
Minister of Labour	Sir Walter Monckton	Harrow; Balliol College, Oxford
President of the Board of Trade	Peter Thorneycroft	Eton; Royal Military Academy
Paymaster General	Lord Cherwell	Wadham College, Christ Church, Oxford; Professor, Oxford

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